CRIME FIGHTERS

10¢

JAN.
NO. 5

NO, PUG, MY FINE FELLOW! THESE SHELL-LIKE EARS OF MINE DETECT NARY A SOUND!
DO YOU HEAR ANY STRANGE, DISTOIBING SOUNDS FROM DAT MAN-HOLE, BOSS? LIKE DIPPY'S VOICE, MAYBE?
HEY, DUDE--- CUT THE COMEDY AND LET'S GET MOVING! THE COPS ARE ON THE WAY!
TWEEET!
LET ME OUT, DUDE... LET ME OUT!!! I'LL STARVE TO DEATH DOWN HERE! (GASP) I'LL NEVER TRY TO MUSCLE IN ON YA AGAIN— I SWEAR!
WOTTA SHAME... DIPPY WAS SUCH A GOOD POKER PLAYER! OH WELL, THAT'S LIFE!

NEW! BOB WEST'S AMAZINGLY EASY "PICTURE METHOD"

• SHOWS HOW TO

PLAY GUITAR

IN 2 WEEKS

OR YOUR MONEY BACK

Think Of The Fun You'll Have

I WONDER HOW MARY LEARNED TO PLAY THE GUITAR SO WELL. A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO SHE COULDN'T PLAY A NOTE. I THINK I'LL ASK HER.
WHY THERE'S NOTHING TO IT. I JUST SENT FOR BOB WEST'S STREAMLINED GUITAR COURSE AND LEARNED RIGHT AWAY
A FEW DAYS LATER
LOOK, PEGGY, ALL I HAVE TO DO IS HOLD MY FINGERS LIKE IT SHOWS HERE IN THE PICTURES ...AND I'M PLAYING!
JUST THINK, PEGGY, A FEW WEEKS AGO I WAS A "WALLFLOWER." NOW LOOK AT HOW POPULAR I AM SINCE I LEARNED TO PLAY THE GUITAR.
YES, AND EVEN A TEN YEAR OLD CHILD CAN FOLLOW THIS SIMPLE "PICTURE METHOD"!

45 PHOTOS SHOW EXACTLY WHERE TO PUT YOUR FINGERS

101 SONGS Words & Music INCLUDED!

★EXPERIENCED GUITAR PLAYERS have told me Bob West's "PICTURE METHOD" improves their playing tremendously and is ideal for beginners. Don't envy friends who are so popular because they play a musical instrument. LEARN TO PLAY THE GUITAR and hold the spotlight at parties, entertainments, or gatherings of friends. You will be amazed at how easy it is to learn to play the Guitar, even if you can't read a note of music.

Play in 2 WEEKS or YOUR MONEY BACK

Now let Bob West, radio's favorite Guitar player, show you how, with his sensational "Picture Method." Don't judge Bob West's "Picture Method" by any other "course" you have ever seen... This is an entirely new method. Most "instruction courses" have only 6 or 8 pictures... but Bob West's new method has **45 actual photographs!** It not only teaches, but **shows you** exactly where and how to place your fingers, etc. Most others offer a few songs... Bob provides 101! Yes, **101 songs** chosen for their radio popularity, so you can sing and play right along with your favorite radio programs or records!

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SEND NO MONEY!

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"THE CASE OF THE GLASS GIRL!"

BASED ON A TRUE STORY

TO OUR READERS...

CLUE NO. 1! IT WAS THE STATUE OF A BEAUTIFUL GIRL... THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF A MYSTERY THAT FORMED A PUZZLE FOR MURDER... JERSEY CITY THAT NIGHT OF OCTOBER 7, 1942, WHEN TERROR AND DEATH WALKED IN A TRAIL OF DOOM! THE PLOT WAS PERFECT... THE SCHEME WELL PLANNED! BUT JUSTICE HAS A WAY OF DOING THINGS... BUT... WAS IT JUSTICE... OR FATE... OR RETRIBUTION? YOU DECIDE!

CLUE NO. 2! THE SCULPTOR HAD SAVED THE LIFE OF ITS MODEL...

The Editor

IT WAS A NIGHT, GRIMLY DRAPED IN WISPS OF FOG! AND, AS SCULPTOR JERRY POPE CROSSED THE CANAL BRIDGE ON THE WAY TO HIS STUDIO, HE SAW SOMETHING THAT MADE THE FLESH ON HIS GAUNT FRAME QUIVER...

ONE SECOND LATER, JERRY FOLLOWED THE GIRL INTO THE INKY WATERS OF THE CANAL...

HERE, INDEED, WAS A TRAGEDY! A GIRL, YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL, WHO WANTED ONLY ONE THING... DEATH!

ANY SIMILARITY BETWEEN ACTUAL PERSONS OR PLACES AND THOSE USED IN THIS STORY IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL.

OH, *WHY* DID YOU? I WANTED SO *MUCH* TO END MY MISERABLE LIFE!

LOOK, MISS, THE CEMETERIES ARE OVERCROWDED AS IT IS! GIVE THE UNDERTAKERS A REST!

AFTER THE RESCUE, THE GIRL WAS TAKEN SAFELY ASHORE! AND THEN...THE MYSTERY BEGAN!

THE SCULPTOR TOOK THE WOULD-BE SUICIDE TO HIS STUDIO, WHERE A CUP OF HOT COFFEE QUIETED HER NERVES AND LOOSENED HER TONGUE...

IT'S UNCANNY--A BEAUTIFUL GIRL LIKE YOU, LOSING YOUR INTEREST IN LIVING! I DON'T GET IT!

IT'S THE SAME OLD, BORING STORY--YOUNG GIRL COMES TO TOWN--NO WORK, NO MONEY, NO FRIENDS, NO WILL TO LIVE! IT'S *SIMPLE!*

WAIT! HOLD THAT EXPRESSION! THAT'S *IT!* OH, *BROTHER!* I'VE BEEN SEARCHING ALL OVER TOWN TO FIND A SUITABLE MODEL FOR A PIECE OF GLASS SCULPTURE! AND I HAD TO DRAG ONE OUT OF THE *CANAL!*

YOU--YOU WANT *ME* TO MODEL FOR YOU?

SO AN ARTIST FOUND THE PERFECT MODEL! BUT SHE WAS DESTINED FOR A MORE GRIM ROLE IN THE LIFE OF JERRY POPE!

A MONTH PASSED! THEN ONE DAY, PHELAN WEBB, JERRY'S BEST FRIEND, RECEIVED A HURRIED SUMMONS TO GO TO JERRY'S STUDIO...

HELLO, YOU MARBLE-MASHER! FROM THE SOUND OF YOUR VOICE ON THE PHONE, I THOUGHT YOU'D ALREADY WON FIRST PRIZE AT THE ANNUAL!

MAYBE I WILL! I'VE HAD A HARD JOB NOT SHOWING YOU MY NEW CREATION, BUT I CAN'T HOLD BACK ANY LONGER, NOW THAT IT'S FINISHED! STAND BACK AND GAZE WITH AWE!

WHY--A *GLASS STATUE*, AND IT'S--IT'S *BREATH-TAKING!*

THANKS, PHELAN! I CALL IT "BEAUTIFUL SADNESS"! IT WAS DONE WITH A GLASS-GRINDING TECHNIQUE I'VE BEEN FOOLING AROUND WITH!

OH! SORRY I RUSHED IN LIKE THIS, JERRY!

THAT *FACE*--THAT BEAUTIFUL QUALITY OF SADNESS--YOU MUST'VE MODELED FOR THIS STATUE!

THE CONVERSATION WAS INTERRUPTED BY A SUDDEN ARRIVAL!

JERRY, I *MUST* BORROW HER! I JUST HAVE TO DO A PORTRAIT OF HER!

HA! HA! HE'S STUCK ON YOU, MADELINE! WHAT DO YOU SAY? PHELAN'S A GOOD PAINTER!

IT'D BE CRUEL TO REFUSE! I DON'T DARE SAY NO!

SO, SHE COULDN'T REFUSE!... SHE DIDN'T *WANT* TO BE CRUEL! BUT SHE *WAS*, WITHOUT KNOWING IT!

GREAT! NOW SUPPOSE WE ALL GO OUT AND HAVE LUNCH! I KNOW A CHARMING TEA-ROOM NOT FAR FROM HERE--AND AFTERWARD, WE CAN BEGIN THE PORTRAIT!
THAT'S WEBBY FOR YOU, MADELINE! STOMACH FIRST--WORK AFTER!
LATER, AT THE TEAROOM, MADELINE PERPLEXEDLY STARED INTO HER EMPTY TEA CUP...
SAY, MADELINE, SNAP OUT OF IT! YOU'LL FIND NO THOUSAND-DOLLAR BILLS IN THAT TEA CUP!
OH! I'M SORRY--I WAS JUST DAY-DREAMING, I GUESS!
READ YOUR FORTUNE, MISS? THE TEA LEAVES ALWAYS LEAVE A MESSAGE IN THE CUP!
NO--NO, PLEASE!
SOMETHING, A GRIM FOREBODING OF EVIL, MADE THE GIRL REFUSE THE GYPSY'S OFFER TO REA? HER DESTINY...
OH, COME ON, MADELINE! IT'S PURE BUNK, BUT FUN!
SURE, GO AHEAD!
ALL--ALL RIGHT!
I SEE GLASS, THROWN ON BLACK WATERS--THIS IS MOST UNUSUAL! I CAN NOT EXPLAIN THE MEANING -- YOU MUST EXCUSE ME NOW!
SEE, MADELINE? SHE CAN'T EVEN DECIPHER HER OWN READING! PURE NONSENSE!
NONSENSE? IS THIS NONSENSE? SOMETIMES FATE SHOWS HER HAND IN STRANGE WAYS...
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, MADELINE, WHILE WE CAN STICK PHELAN WITH THE CHECK!
THANKS! YOUR GENEROSITY KNOWS NO BOUNDS! YOU GO AHEAD... I'LL PAY IT!
PLEASE EXCUSE ME, SIR--BUT I COULD NOT SPEAK IN FRONT OF THE OTHERS!
WELL? WHAT IS IT?
IMPATIENTLY, PHELAN TURNED TO HEAR WHAT THE GYPSY HAD TO SAY! AND HE HEARD...
3

BECAUSE OF YOU, THE GIRL IS TO DIE! THE LEAVES HAVE NEVER LIED!
WHAT? ABSURD!
SCORN CURLED HIS LIP AS HE TURNED AND LEFT THE CAFE!

WHAT DID THE OLD LADY TELL YOU, WEBBY? YOU LOOK POSITIVELY ZINC WHITE!
OH, NOTHING IMPORTANT, JERRY! LET'S GET ACROSS THE CANAL TO MY STUDIO--I WANT TO SET UP MY CANVAS BEFORE THE NATURAL LIGHT FADES!

JERRY, BEFORE MADELINE COMES OUT OF THE DRESSING ROOM, TELL ME ABOUT HER--WHERE DID YOU MEET HER?
BUT, WEBBY, I PROMISED HER--OH, WELL, SHE'LL NEVER KNOW! IT WAS LAST NEW YEAR'S EVE! I HAD LEFT YOUR STUDIO AND WAS WALKING ACROSS THE CANAL BRIDGE...
AT HIS STUDIO, A SHROUD OF QUESTIONS BLANKETED WEBB'S MIND--HE COULDN'T FORGET THE STARTLING PREDICTION MADE BY THE OLD GYPSY...

MINUTES LATER..
...YOU MEAN TO SAY YOU'VE BEEN HIDING MADELINE ALL THIS TIME?
NOT EXACTLY! SHE WANTED TO STAY IN SECLUSION BECAUSE OF WHAT HAPPENED! AND I'LL TELL YOU ANOTHER SECRET--WHEN I CAN MANUFACTURE ENOUGH COURAGE, I'M GOING TO ASK HER TO MARRY ME!

M-MARRY YOU?
YES--BUT DON'T CONGRATULATE ME YET--HERE SHE COMES!

I'M READY, MISTER WEBB!
WELL, FELLOW ARTIST, I KNOW YOU WORK BETTER ALONE! SO I'LL SCOOT BACK TO MY OWN STUDIO TO PUT SOME FINISHING TOUCHES ON "BEAUTIFUL SADNESS"!

AS SOON AS JERRY CLOSED THE DOOR, PHELAN WAS INSTANTLY HYPNOTIZED BY THE STRANGE BEAUTY OF THE PENSIVE GIRL! THE ROOM SEEMED TO BE FILLED WITH "BEAUTIFUL SADNESS"!... AND WITH A WIERD, UNCANNY MOOD!
SHE'S MAGNETIC! I CAN'T TAKE MY EYES AWAY FROM HER! IT IS AS IF THE PAST UNHAPPINESS OF HER LIFE HAS FILLED HER WITH A MYSTERIOUS KIND OF BEAUTY!

AS THE PORTRAIT BLOSSOMED ON THE CANVAS, SLEEP HELD NO REST FOR PHELAN WEBB--MADELINE'S WISTFUL FACE SEEMED TO BE HIS CONSTANT MENTAL IMAGE!

MADELINE! OH--IT WAS ONLY A DREAM! I--I MUST TELL HER TODAY--I *MUST!*

LATER...

A FABULOUS PORTRAIT, PHELAN! IF I HAD THE PRICE, I'D PURCHASE IT!

NO NEED FOR THAT, JERRY! I'M *GIVING* IT TO YOU!

I'M HONORED--FLATTERED--BUT MY BIRTHDAY IS MONTHS OFF!

IT'S SORT OF A GIFT FOR--FOR BRINGING MADELINE AND ME TOGETHER!

YOU SEE, JERRY--MADELINE AND I ARE GOING TO BE MARRIED TOMORROW!

WHAT? I--I HAD NO IDEA...

THEY CAN'T DO THIS--I LOVE MADELINE!

IT *IS* SUDDEN, JERRY--BUT WE LOVE EACHOTHER VERY MUCH!

YES--YES, OF COURSE--'GRATULATIONS!

SO *THIS* IS HOW SHE TREATS ME! HOW COULD SHE?

BACK IN HIS STUDIO, JERRY'S HOLLOW SENTIMENT OF CONGRATULATIONS GAVE WAY TO A STILL DEEPER RAGING ANGER--FOR, NOW... ALL HE HAD OF MADELINE WAS A PORTRAIT AND A COLD, GLASS STATUE...

I SHOULD HAVE LET YOU DROWN IN THE CANAL!

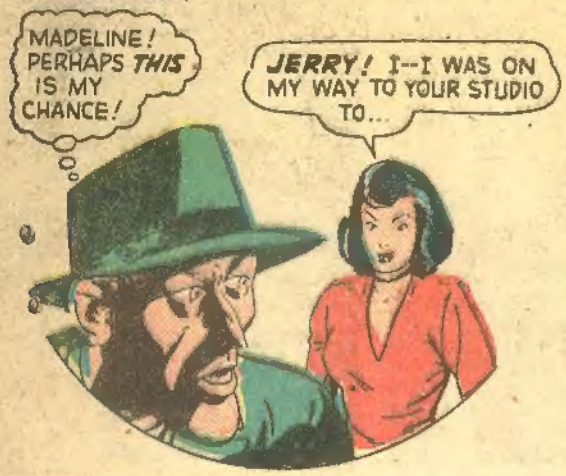
CRASH!

THAT GYPSY TEA READER WAS RIGHT--THERE *WILL* BE GLASS THROWN ON BLACK WATER! I DON'T EVER WANT TO SEE THIS STATUE AGAIN!

THAT EVENING, A DETERMINED JERRY POPE WAS SEEN WHEELING A CLOTHED OBJECT ACROSS THE CANAL BRIDGE...

I'LL WAIT UNTIL THIS WOMAN PASSES!... THEN--PLUNK! INTO THE CANAL IT GOES!

WAS IT COINCIDENCE OR THE LEERING MOCKERY OF GRIM FATE THAT CAUSED JERRY POPE, AT THAT MOMENT, TO MEET THE ONE PERSON HE DESPISED?



OH, JERRY--YOU HAVE THE STATUE WITH YOU, BUT WHY? AND THE NOSE IS BROKEN! HERE--LET ME HAVE IT! PERHAPS IT CAN BE CEMENTED ON!
I HATE HER FOR WHAT SHE'S DONE TO ME! HATE HER! *HATE HER!*

NO! DON'T TOUCH IT, MADELINE! I WAS GOING TO FLING IT INTO THE CANAL! BUT HOW MUCH MORE APPROPRIATE TO THROW ITS *LIVING COUNTERPART,* INSTEAD!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? *JERRY!*

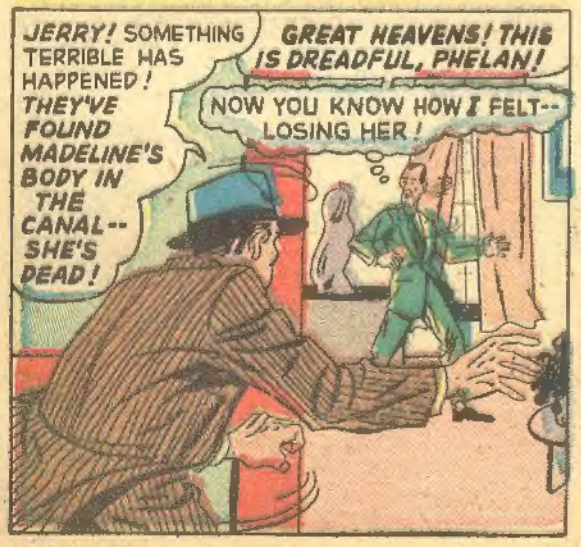
THE IDEA, INSPIRED BY BITTERNESS AND HATE, BECAME A LIVING PLAN!

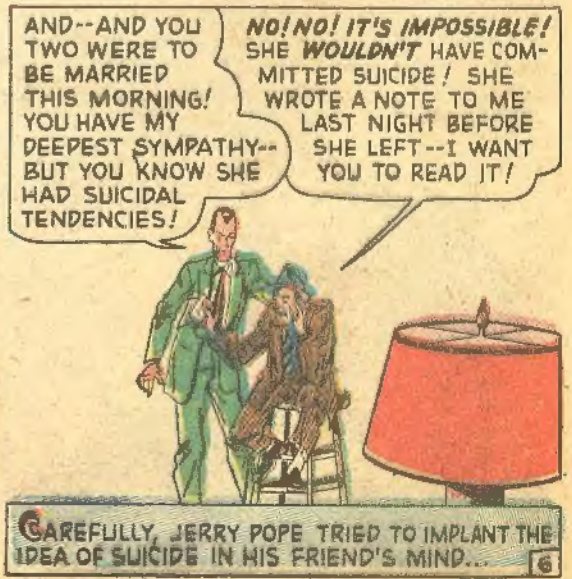
WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION, HE FLUNG THE GIRL INTO THE VERY CANAL, FROM WHICH HE HAD ONCE SAVED HER!

SLEEP WELL, MADELINE! WHO KNOWS? THEY MAY EVEN CALL IT "SUICIDE"! I'LL KEEP THE STATUE--YES--I MAY EVEN PLACE IT AT THE HEAD OF YOUR GRAVE!

SO A CRIME WAS COMMITTED--AND LIKE ALL CRIMES, IT WAS RUTHLESS, SENSELESS, AND COWARDLY!

THE FOLLOWING MORNING AT JERRY'S STUDIO...


JERRY! SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAS HAPPENED! *THEY'VE FOUND MADELINE'S BODY IN THE CANAL--SHE'S DEAD!*
GREAT HEAVENS! THIS IS DREADFUL, PHELAN!
NOW YOU KNOW HOW *I* FELT--LOSING HER!


AND--AND YOU TWO WERE TO BE MARRIED THIS MORNING! YOU HAVE MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY--BUT YOU KNOW SHE HAD SUICIDAL TENDENCIES!
NO! NO! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! SHE *WOULDN'T* HAVE COMMITTED SUICIDE! SHE WROTE A NOTE TO ME LAST NIGHT BEFORE SHE LEFT--I WANT YOU TO READ IT!

CAREFULLY, JERRY POPE TRIED TO IMPLANT THE IDEA OF SUICIDE IN HIS FRIEND'S MIND...

THE WORDS IN THE NOTE SEARED INTO JERRY'S MIND LIKE A FLAMING BRANDING IRON! THE BLOOD DRAINED FROM HIS FACE!--HIS EYES WIDENED IN HORROR!--THE TERRIBLE HAND OF TERROR SEEMED TO BE PUSHING HIM BACK--BACK...

N-NO--PLEASE, MADELINE--N-NO! FORGIVE ME-- I DID NOT KNOW-- I DID NOT KNOW!

WATCH OUT--THE STATUE!

OHHHHHH!

AAAHHHH!

CRASH!

ACCIDENT? FATE? RETRIBUTION? YOU DECIDE!

THE GLASS HAS PENETRATED HIS BACK! HE'S BEEN STABBED TO DEATH!

LATER, WHEN THE POLICE ARRIVED...

WHAT A PITY! OH, MR. WEBB, WE FOUND THIS PIECE OF GLASS, CLUTCHED IN THE DEAD GIRL'S HAND THIS MORNING!

LET--LET ME SEE IT!

IT--IT FITS... IT FITS!

YES...NOW WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE JERRY POPE PUSHED MADELINE O'REILLY OFF THE CANAL BRIDGE!

LET ME HAVE THAT NOTE, MR. WEBB -- I WANT TO READ IT ONCE MORE!

YES--THE NOTE--HERE!

Dear Phelan,
I've made a terrible mistake. I thought I loved you, but I find my affection is really deep friendship. It is Jerry I truly love. I must go to him tonight to explain. I know you will understand.
Ever Grateful,
Madeline

ACCIDENT? FATE? RETRIBUTION? YOU DECIDE! THE END

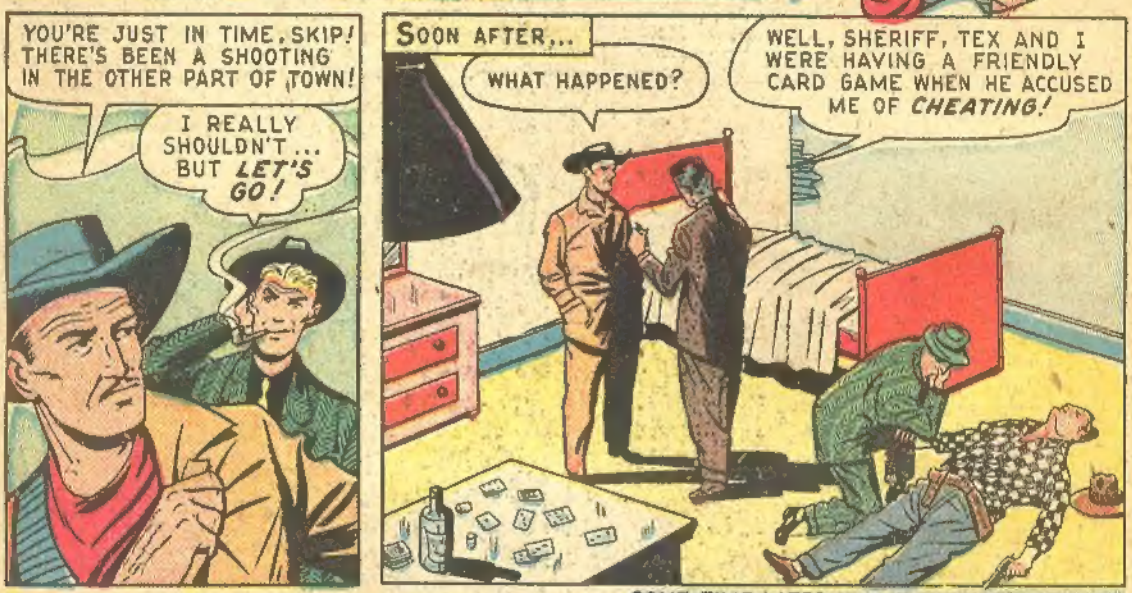
LET'S PLAY DETECTIVE

"MURDER OUT WEST!"

4024

STARRING DETECTIVE SKIP McCOY

IN THE BORDER TOWN OF GUNVILLE, SHERIFF TOM HAYNES RECEIVES A VISITOR FROM THE EAST!
SKIP McCOY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
VACATIONING, TIM! MY TRAIN WAS PASSING THROUGH AND I THOUGHT I'D SURPRISE YOU!
RING!
SHERIFF HAYNES SPEAKING! WHAT? I'LL BE RIGHT OVER!


YOU'RE JUST IN TIME, SKIP! THERE'S BEEN A SHOOTING IN THE OTHER PART OF TOWN!
I REALLY SHOULDN'T... BUT LET'S GO!
SOON AFTER,...
WHAT HAPPENED?
WELL, SHERIFF, TEX AND I WERE HAVING A FRIENDLY CARD GAME WHEN HE ACCUSED ME OF CHEATING!

I REALIZED HE'D HAD TOO MUCH T' DRINK, SO I IGNORED HIS REMARKS--BUT HE WANTED ME TO RETURN THE MONEY I HAD WON FROM HIM! I REFUSED AND HE REACHED FOR HIS GUN! IT WAS HIS LIFE OR MINE!
LOOKS LIKE AN OPEN AND SHUT CASE! GUESS I'LL HAVE TO LET HIM GO!
DON'T BELIEVE HIS STORY! HE KILLED TEX IN COLD BLOOD!
SOME TIME LATER, AT THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE...
OKAY! I KILLED HIM LIKE THAT EASTERNER SAID! HE CHEATED ME OUT OF MY RANCH YEARS BACK! HOW DID YOU KNOW MY STORY WAS NOT TRUE?
WELL, IT WAS MY DETECTIVE FRIEND WHO SPOTTED A FLAW IN YOUR ALIBI; THERE WAS A GUN IN TEX'S LEFT HAND WHICH MAY HAVE INDICATED HE WAS LEFT-HANDED; BUT HIS HOLSTER WAS ON HIS RIGHT SIDE WHICH TOLD US TEX WAS RIGHT-HANDED; SO WE KNOW THE GUN HAD BEEN PUT IN HIS HAND!

Captain Tootsie
BABE RUTH
BY C. C. BECK
HOOTIN' ZOOTS, CAPTAIN TOOTSIE, ARE WE REALLY GONNA SEE A MOVIE BEING MADE HERE?
YES, ROLLO, ALLED ARTISTS IS SHOOTING SCENES FOR "THE BABE RUTH STORY" HERE TODAY!
MEN, MEET THE STAR WILLIAM BENDIX. BILL, THESE ARE SOME YOUNG FRIENDS OF MINE!
GLAD TO KNOW YA MEN ANY FRIENDS OF CAPTAIN TOOTSIE'S ARE FRIENDS OF MINE!
WHAT SCENE ARE YOU MAKING TODAY MR BENDIX?
TODAY WE'RE MAKING THE FAMOUS SCENE THAT TOOK PLACE IN THE WORLD'S SERIES OF 1932. BABE RUTH (THAT'S ME) IS UP AT BAT
WE'RE READY TO SHOOT THE SCENE! PLACES, EVERYBODY!
YORK
STRIKE TWO!
THE STANDS GO WILD WITH EXCITEMENT. THE CHICAGO CUB PLAYERS RAZZ THE DAYLIGHTS OUT OF THE BATTER!
BOOOOO
STRIKE THE BAMBINO OUT!
AND THEN HITS IT!
HOORAY!
CRACK!
IT'S ANOTHER HOMER FOR THE BABE! EXCITED AND HAPPY PLAYERS RUSH TO CONGRATULATE THE ONE AND ONLY SULTAN OF SWAT AS HE TROTS HOME!
CONGRATULATIONS, BABE!
WOW!
THAT'S JUST ONE EXCITING SCENE FROM "THE BABE RUTH STORY"... HOW D YA LIKE IT, FELLAS?
WE'RE GOING TO TELL ALL OUR FRIENDS TO BE SURE TO SEE THE PICTURE, BILL! THEY WON'T WANT TO MISS IT! NOW LET'S ALL HAVE A ROUND OF TOOTSIE ROLLS!
SWELL IDEA, BILL!
GOSH, THAT WAS GREAT, MR BENDIX!
TOOTSIE CANDIES'VE BEEN MY FAVORITE EVER SINCE I WAS A KID! THEY'RE PACKED WITH THE WHIZZIN' QUICK ENERGY YOU NEED TO SCORE HOME RUNS... TO BE A STAR! SUPER DELICIOUS, TOO! GET SOME TOOTSIE ROLLS, TOOTSIE POPS AND TOOTSIE COCONUT FUDGE TODAY!
POP
Tootsie Roll
WM. BENDIX AS HE APPEARS IN THE BABE RUTH STORY
A Roy Del Ruth Production
Released Through Allied Artists

"JUDAS OF THE SAN PABLO EXPRESS!"

BASED ON A TRUE STORY

HABIT..."A TENDENCY CONSTANTLY SHOWN TO ACT IN A CERTAIN WAY!" THAT'S HOW THE DICTIONARY DESCRIBES "HABIT!" A LITTLE THING, YOU SAY? YES, BUT WOULD IT INTEREST YOU TO KNOW THAT A HABIT BECAME...A ***CLUE?*** A CLUE TO A GRIM, STRANGE CASE OF A MAN WHO TURNED TRAITOR TO A FAITH AND A TRUST! A MAN WHO DARED EVERYTHING ON ONE GAMBLE WITH FATE, ONE IRONIC BIT OF... HABIT! HERE, IN HIS OWN WORDS IS THE TRUE STORY OF THIS MAN WHOM THEY CALLED A JUDAS! BUT WHOM DID HE BETRAY? THE COMPANY HE WORKED FOR, OR... HIMSELF?

MY NAME IS JOHN PERCIVAL! I USED TO BE AN EXPRESS GUARD FOR SOUTHWESTERN RAILROADS. I WAS ASSIGNED TO THE *CRACK* SAN PABLO EXPRESS RUN FROM TULSA TO SAN PABLO! DAY AFTER DAY FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS, I MADE THAT SAME MONOTONOUS RUN, AND *HATED* EVERY DAY OF IT! I WANTED TO GET AWAY! I WANTED EXCITEMENT! I WANTED TO LIVE!

THE WORDS YOU ARE NOW READING COME FROM THE LIPS OF A MAN WHO IS LIVING OUT THE REST OF HIS LIFE IN A STONE PRISON CELL! THINK OF IT! ***THE REST OF HIS LIFE!*** HOW DID HE GET THERE? WHAT TURN OF CIRCUMSTANCES LED HIM TO THIS? READ ON...

THEN ON NOVEMBER 23, 1946, I SAW MY CHANCE! AS USUAL, I HAD STOPPED IN AT THE STATION MASTER'S OFFICE TO PICK UP MY RECEIPT FOR A SMALL CASH SHIPMENT WE WERE CARRYING THAT NIGHT..."

HELLO, JOHN! HERE'S YOUR RECEIPT FOR THAT CASH SHIPMENT YOU'RE CARRYING ON-GHT!

TEN THOUSAND, HUH? WE'VE BEEN GETTING A LOT OF SMALL SHIPMENTS LATELY!

ANY SIMILARITY BETWEEN ACTUAL PERSONS OR PLACES AND THOSE USED IN THIS STORY IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL

YOU'RE CARRYING A BIG SHIPMENT DAY AFTER TOMORROW! *ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY THOUSAND BUCKS!* THE TULSA TRUST COMPANY'S SHIPPING IT OUT TO THE SAN PABLO BRANCH BANK!

"THAT HUNDRED AND SEVENTY GRAND WAS ALL I COULD THINK OF ON MY RUN THAT DAY!"

THAT MONEY WOULD RELEASE ME FROM THIS HUMDRUM JOB! IT WOULD MAKE ME *INDEPENDENT!* I COULD BEGIN TO *LIVE!* I'VE *GOT* TO HAVE IT! I'VE GOT TO TAKE A CHANCE!

"BY THE TIME WE ROLLED INTO THE SAN PABLO YARDS, I HAD MADE UP MY MIND."

I'LL DO IT! BUT IT HAS TO BE CAREFULLY PLANNED AND PERPETRATED! IT HAS TO BE A *PERFECT CRIME!* THE ROBBERY'S GOT TO GO OFF WITHOUT A HITCH, AND I'VE GOT TO DISAPPEAR *COMPLETELY* AND WITHOUT A *TRACE* AFTER IT!

"SUDDENLY I *KNEW* HOW I WAS GOING TO DO IT AND LEFT THE YARDS, THE PLAN RIPENING IN MY MIND."

HEY, JOHN, WHERE YOU HEADED?

HUH? OH, HELLO, SANDY! I'M JUST GOING DOWN THE STREET FOR A FEW BEERS!

"ON MY FREQUENT TRIPS TO SAN PABLO, I HAD BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH A SALOON HANGER-ON, WHO LOOKED VERY MUCH LIKE ME! HE COULD'VE BEEN MISTAKEN FOR MY TWIN-BROTHER."

BUSH EVANS IS THE MAN I NEED! HE'LL FIT IN PERFECTLY WITH MY PLAN!

"...FINALLY LOCATED HIM IN HIS FAVORITE GINMILL."

JOHN! HI, JOHN OL' FELLOW! HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A COUPLE WEEKS!

HELLO, BUSH!

HOW 'BOUT BUYIN' AN OLD PAL A LITTLE DRINK?

LATER, BUSH! LET'S GO TO A BOOTH WHERE WE CAN TALK!

"I TALKED TO HIM LIKE A "DUTCH UNCLE", WITHOUT FEAR OF EXPOSURE / OH, I KNEW BUSH EVANS!"

WHAT'S UP, JOHN?

I'VE MADE UP MY MIND TO ROB THE SAN PABLO EXPRESS OF *ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS!* I WANT *YOUR* HELP!

M-ME?

YOU! AT JACINTO WELLS, THIRTY MILES OUTSIDE OF TULSA, WE STOP TO TAKE ON WATER! YOU CAN BOARD US THERE / I'LL HAVE THE CAR DOOR AND THE SAFE *OPEN* FOR YOU / YOU CLEAN OUT THE SAFE, TIE ME UP AND *SKIP! IT WILL BE EASY!*

"IT DIDN'T TAKE MUCH TALKING TO MAKE BUSH SEE IT MY WAY / HE SWALLOWED THE IDEA--HOOK, LINE AND SINKER!"

THEN IT'S ALL ARRANGED? JACINTO WELLS, THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW!

IT'S A DEAL / WOW! WITH *MY* END OF THAT CASH, I CAN *REALLY* HIT THE HIGH SPOTS!

"ON THE BIG NIGHT, I CAME ON THE JOB AS USUAL--A BIT NERVOUS, BUT CONFIDENT THAT THINGS WOULD GO OFF AS PLANNED..."

HERE'S YOUR RECEIPT FOR THE BIG SHIPMENT, JOHN / THEY'RE LOADING IT NOW!

THANKS, CHASE! I'LL GO RIGHT OUT!

YOU'VE GOT A *BIG* HAUL TONIGHT, JOHN / BETTER TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT!

IN *TWENTY YEARS* ON THIS RUN, I'VE *NEVER* LOST A NICKEL YET!

"AT LAST WE WERE STARTED."

HAVE A GOOD RUN, JOHN!

I *WILL*, HANK! THE *BEST* YET!

"LESS THAN AN HOUR LATER, WE WERE SLOWING DOWN FOR THE TOWER AT JACINTO WELLS."

THIS IS IT! BUSH SHOULD SHOW ANY MINUTE! WHERE ARE YOU, BUSH? COME AND GET IT, BUSH--MORE THAN YOU BARGAINED FOR!

"FOR A MOMENT, I WAS WORRIED / THEN, AS WE STOPPED, BUSH STEPPED FROM THE SHADOWS AND LEAPT INTO THE CAR!"
WHEW! FOR A MOMENT THERE I THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T GOING TO SHOW!
NOT SHOW, WHEN THERE'S A HUNDRED AND SEVENTY GRAND TO PICK UP? WHERE'S THE SAFE?
WELL, HERE I GO!
YES, BUSH! HERE YOU GO!
WHA-? JOHN, YOU DIRTY DOUBLE-CROSSING--
YOU D DN'T THINK I'D SHARE IT, DID YOU?
ONE OF US WILL TAKE IT ALL, JOHN, BUT IT'LL BE ME! ME, YOU UNDERSTAND! I'M GONNA KILL YOU!
PERHAPS, BUSH!
...PERHAPS!
BUT .WITH LUCK, I CAN STILL CARRY EVERYTHING OUT PERFECTLY!
"NOW I WAS A KILLER ..A MURDERER/ I HAD TAKEN HUMAN LIFE... ME, ONCE MEEK AND MILD..! HAD JOINED THE NEFARIOUS RANKS OF THE UNCLEAN IN SOUL!
I HOPE THIS WILL TURN OUT ALL RIGHT! BUT SOMEHOW..I'VE GOT A FEELING IT'S NOT QUITE RIGHT! OH, WELL.. I CAN'T STOP NOW!
14

"AT LAST, THE JOB WAS DONE / QUICKLY, I CHANGED CLOTHES WITH HIM!"

ALIVE, YOU CAME IN VERY HANDY, BUSH! *DEAD*, YOU'LL COME IN EVEN *HANDIER!* THEY'LL FIND YOUR BODY, BUSH, AND THEY'LL THINK IT'S *ME!* YOU'VE GOT ALL MY IDENTIFICATION PAPERS-- *EVERYTHING!*

THEY'LL FEEL *SO* SORRY FOR ME, WHEN THEY-- HA! HA! --FIND MY BODY! `POOR JOHN,' THEY'LL SAY! HE WAS *SO* LOYAL, *SO* HONEST! AND WHILE THEY SEARCH FOR MY KILLER, I'LL BE WHERE YOU'D *LIKE TO BE*, SPENDING THIS MONEY!

"I LOCKED THE DOOR OF THE EXPRESS CAR AND JUMPED DOWN THE EMBANKMENT..."

EVERYTHING'S GONE *PERFECTLY!* I'M *THROUGH* WITH THAT DREARY, MONOTONOUS LIFE! I'M *FREE!*

"WHAT HAPPENED LATER WAS *THIS!* WHEN THE TRAIN CAME INTO SAN PABLO STATION, THE LOCKED DOOR CREATED A STIR!"

HEY, PERCIVAL, OPEN UP IN THERE! OPEN UP!

SOMETHING MUST BE WRONG! GET THE STATION MASTER, SOME MORE MEN AND A CROW-BAR! WE'LL HAVE TO BREAK OPEN THE DOOR!

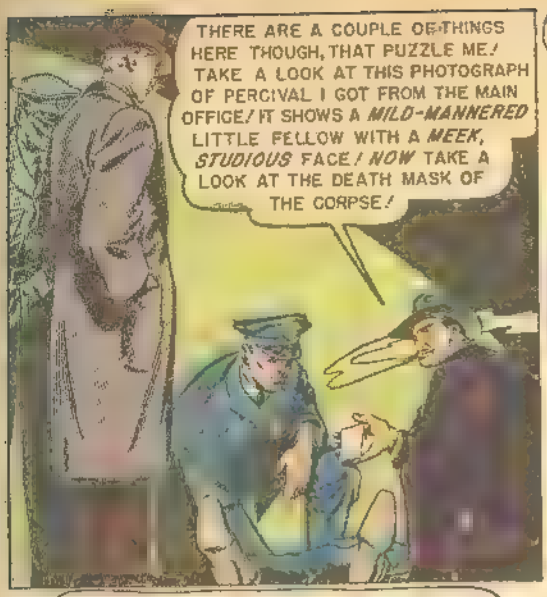
IT'S PERCIVAL! IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S (GULP!) *DEAD!*

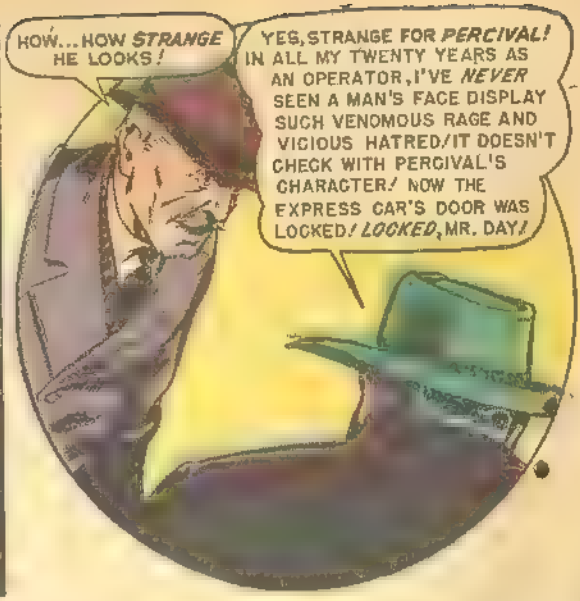
HEY, THE SAFE'S BEEN *CRACKED* TOO! WE'VE GOTTA TELL THE SUPERVISOR! AND *SOMEBODY GET THE LAW!*

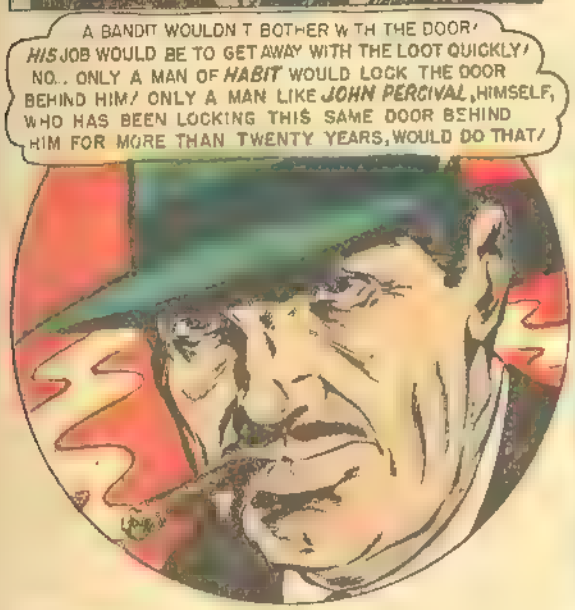
"THE LAW CAME IN THE PERSON OF DETECTIVE THOMAS, OF THE WESTERN DETECTIVE AGENCY, A PRIVATE OUTFIT RETAINED BY THE RAILROAD..."

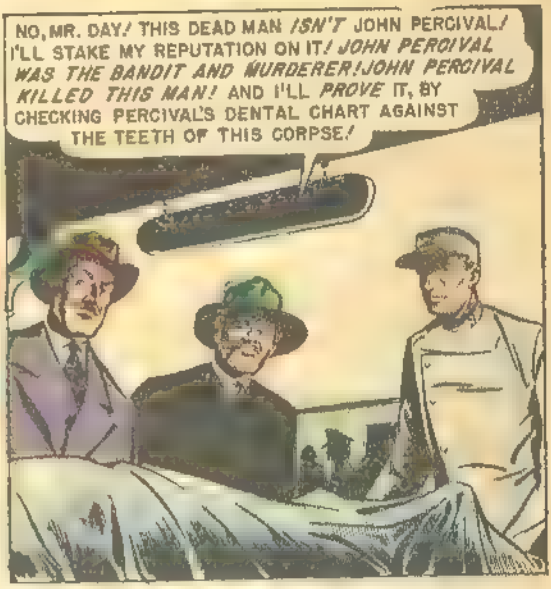
POOR DEVIL! IT'S PERCIVAL, ALL RIGHT! HE WAS ALWAYS SUCH AN *INOFFENSIVE* LITTLE FELLOW AND A *DEVOTED* EMPLOYEE! *WE WANT HIS MURDERER, THOMAS! WE WANT HIM BAD!*

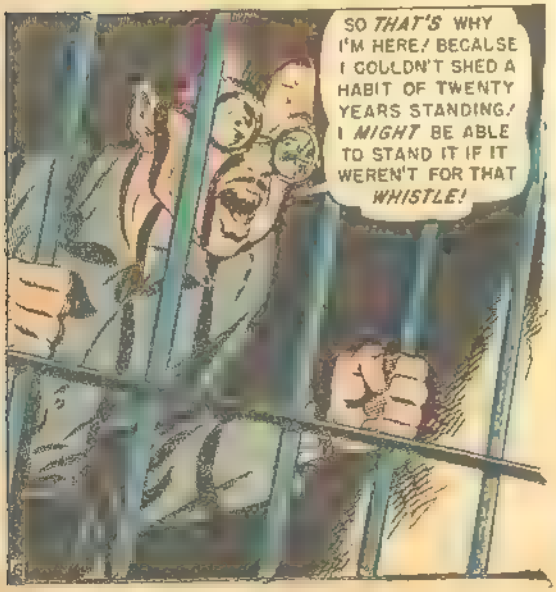
YOU'LL *GET* HIM, SIR!


THERE ARE A COUPLE OF THINGS HERE THOUGH, THAT PUZZLE ME! TAKE A LOOK AT THIS PHOTOGRAPH OF PERCIVAL I GOT FROM THE MAIN OFFICE! IT SHOWS A *MILD-MANNERED* LITTLE FELLOW WITH A *MEEK, STUDIOUS* FACE! *NOW* TAKE A LOOK AT THE DEATH MASK OF THE CORPSE!


HOW... HOW *STRANGE* HE LOOKS!
YES, STRANGE FOR *PERCIVAL!* IN ALL MY TWENTY YEARS AS AN OPERATOR, I'VE *NEVER* SEEN A MAN'S FACE DISPLAY SUCH VENOMOUS RAGE AND VICIOUS HATRED! IT DOESN'T CHECK WITH PERCIVAL'S CHARACTER! NOW THE EXPRESS CAR'S DOOR WAS LOCKED! *LOCKED*, MR. DAY!


A BANDIT WOULDN T BOTHER W TH THE DOOR! *HIS* JOB WOULD BE TO GET AWAY WITH THE LOOT QUICKLY! NO.. ONLY A MAN OF *HABIT* WOULD LOCK THE DOOR BEHIND HIM! ONLY A MAN LIKE *JOHN PERCIVAL*, HIMSELF, WHO HAS BEEN LOCKING THIS SAME DOOR BEHIND HIM FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS, WOULD DO THAT!


NO, MR. DAY! THIS DEAD MAN *ISN'T* JOHN PERCIVAL! I'LL STAKE MY REPUTATION ON IT! *JOHN PERCIVAL WAS THE BANDIT AND MURDERER! JOHN PERCIVAL KILLED THIS MAN!* AND I'LL *PROVE* IT, BY CHECKING PERCIVAL'S DENTAL CHART AGAINST THE TEETH OF THIS CORPSE!


SO *THAT'S* WHY I'M HERE! BECAUSE I COULDN'T SHED A HABIT OF TWENTY YEARS STANDING! I *MIGHT* BE ABLE TO STAND IT IF IT WEREN'T FOR THAT *WHISTLE!*

THAT *WHISTLE!* IT DRIVES ME CRAZY TO THINK I'LL NEVER GET AWAY FROM IT *NOW!* TO KNOW, THAT FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE, I'LL *HAVE* TO LISTEN TO THE TRAIN WHISTLE OF *THE SAN PABLO EXPRESS!*
WHOOOOOEEEE!
THE END

WANTED BY THE F.B.I.

$100.00 REWARD

WILL BE PAID FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO THE ARREST OF ANY OF THESE FUGITIVES!

ALBERT ENOS BERRINGER, JR.

With aliases: Albert Keith, Bert Ipick, Frank Shipley, Albert Ross Weston

DESCRIPTION

Age 49, born November 6, 1898, Evanston, Pennsylvania, Height 5 ft. 8½ in., Weight 173 pounds, Build stocky, Hair brown, Eyes blue, Complexion medium, Race white, Nationality American, Occupation truck driver, garage mechanic, Scars and marks cut scar right side of abdomen, cut scar right index finger, large mole on upper left arm, facial contour, nose broken.

NATIONAL MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT ACT CRIMINAL RECORD

Since 1918 Berringer has been arrested several times on charges including robbery with firearms, burglary and the operation of a confidence game. On July 6, 1942, a Federal Grand Jury at Denver, Colorado returned an indictment charging him with transporting a stolen automobile from Denver, Colorado to Ballinger, Texas, in violation of the National Motor Vehicle Theft Act.

Fingerprint Classification

18 O 26 W IMO 18
L 28 W 001
25
Ref 28

AMOS HARRISON EVERMAN

With aliases: Leon C. Chadwick, Harrison Everman

DESCRIPTION

Age 38, born October 10, 1910, Winchester, Kentucky (not verified), Height 5 feet, 9 inches, Weight 135 pounds, Build slender, Complexion ashy, Race white, Hair black, Eyes brown, Occupations farmer, plumber, Scars and marks small cut scar under left eye, cut scar on right cheek, tip of left thumb amputated.

UNLAWFUL FLIGHT TO AVOID PROSECUTION FOR BURGLARY

CRIMINAL RECORD

Everman has been arrested twice in the State of Ohio, Indiana on charges of burglary, in the State of Michigan for breaking and entering, and in the State of Michigan for malicious destruction of property. A complaint was filed January 11, 1946, before a United States Commissioner at Miami, Florida, charging Amos Harrison Everman with violating Section 408e, Title 18 U. S. Code in that he unlawfully fled from the State of Florida to avoid prosecution for the crime of burglary.

Fingerprint Classification

19 O 5 R 000 18
I 17 R 005

With aliases: Ruben Avent, Rubin Avent, Robin Avent, "Nambo"

DESCRIPTION

Age 36, born October 13, 1911, Seaboard, North Carolina, Height 5 feet 7½ inches, Weight 175 pounds, Eyes maroon, Hair black, Complexion dark brown, Build stocky, Race Negro, Nationality American, Occupations farmer, lumber, laborer, stevedore, truck driver, Scars and marks 3-inch cut scar right forearm, cut scar lower right side of forehead, two gold upper front teeth, Has speech impediment.

UNLAWFUL FLIGHT TO ESCAPE PROSECUTION FOR MURDER

CRIMINAL RECORD

Avent has been arrested in the State of Delaware for carrying a concealed deadly weapon. A complaint was filed before a U. S. Commissioner at Shelby, Mount, North Carolina, March 14, 1945 charging Rubbie Avent with violating Section 408e Title 18, U. S. Code in that he unlawfully fled from the State of North Carolina to avoid prosecution for the crime of murder.

Fingerprint Classification:

13 M 1 U III 7
S 1 W III

RED UNIT

Annie Oakley
Blackstone the Magician
Blonde Phantom
Complete Mystery Stories
Crimefighters Always Win
Georgie
Ideal Comics
Joker Comics
Justice
Lawbreakers Always Lose
Margie
Marvel Mystery Comics
Millie the Model
Namora
Nellie the Nurse
Patsy Walker
Sub-Mariner
Sun Girl
Teen Comics
Tessie the Typist
Tex Morgan
Two-Gun Kid
Wild Western
Willie

BLUE-YELLOW UNIT

All-True Crime Cases
All Winners
Blaze Carson
Captain America
Cindy
Comedy Comics
Frankie
Gay Comics
Hedy de Vine
Human Torch
Jeanie
Junior Miss
Kid Colt
Krazy Komics
Lana
Mitzi
My Romance
Oscar
Powerhouse Pepper
Rusty
Super Rabbit
Tex Taylor
The Witness
Venus
Wacky Duck

MARVEL COMIC GROUP

Hi, Friends:

The editors of this magazine would like to ask you an important question — Why are you reading this magazine?

We believe the answer is that you enjoy comics, and that you enjoy reading this particular comic.

We want to help you protect your right to buy and read your favorite magazines, as long as they contain nothing that might be harmful to you. That is why we are writing you this open letter.

Lately, lots of people have been criticizing comics. They have been saying that comics teach you youngsters things that are not good for you, things like violence, cruelty, immorality, etc.

Some time back, we were fortunate in obtaining editorial advice from Dr. Jean Thompson, a psychiatrist in the Child Guidance Bureau of the New York City Board of Education. Dr. Thompson read our magazines, approved our stories generally, gave us suggestions for the finest kind of stories, and agreed to serve as editorial consultant on all future magazines. She will insure the fact that our comics contain nothing that might meet with objections from your parents, teachers or friends.

That is <u>our</u> answer to the charge that comics are bad.

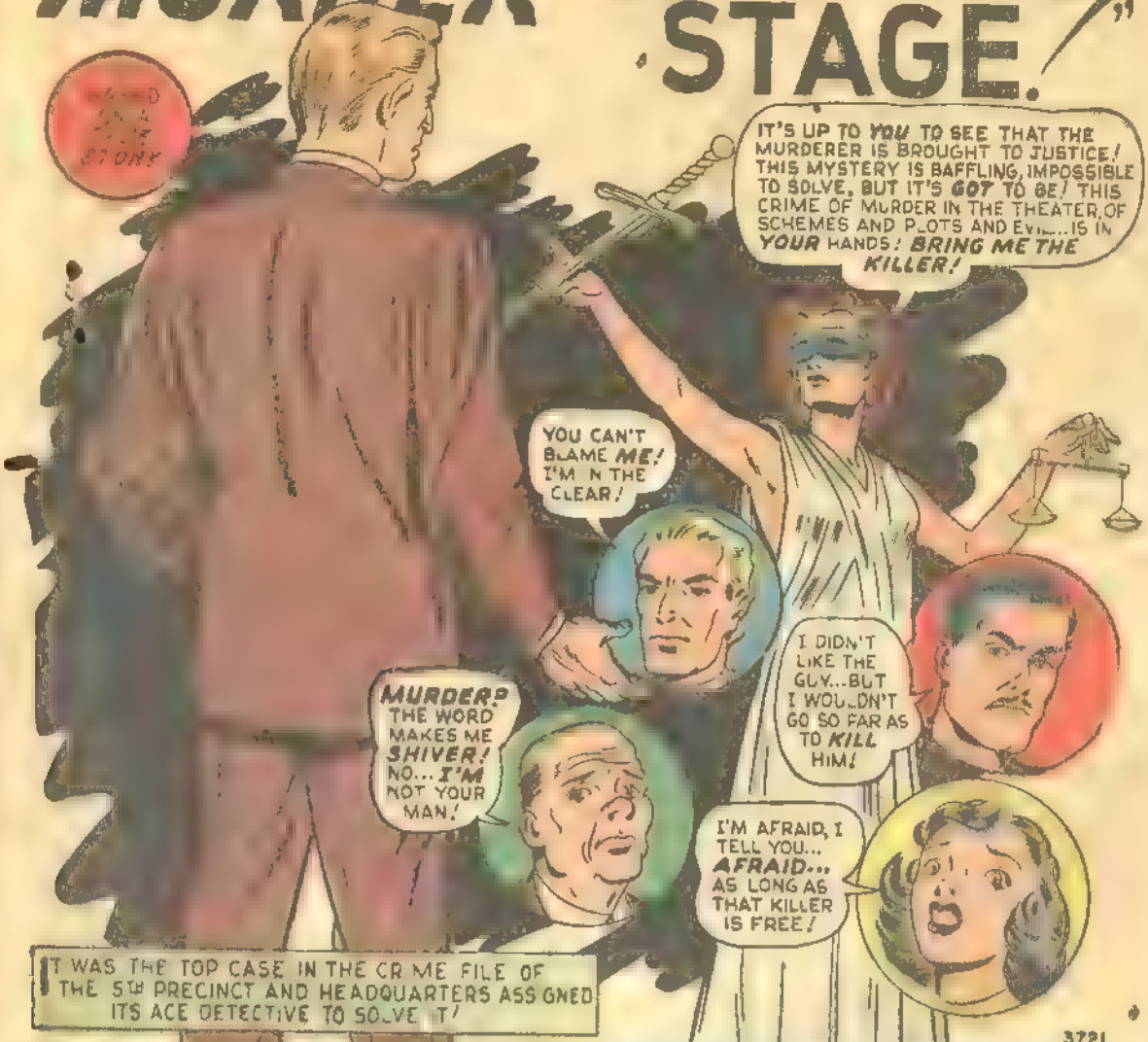
Now, this is the way we can help <u>you</u> keep the privilege of buying and reading what you want. The magazines listed on this page are all in the Marvel Comic Group. Look through them, and you will see that there is nothing in these magazines that could possibly be considered harmful. Then show them to the critics of comics. Prove to those people that here is reading matter that no one can criticize.

Use judgment. Buy only the best comics, like the magazines listed on this page, or any of the other <u>good</u> ones, and prove to people that the magazines <u>you</u> read are above criticism.

If you do that, no one will ever want to take your magazines away from you.

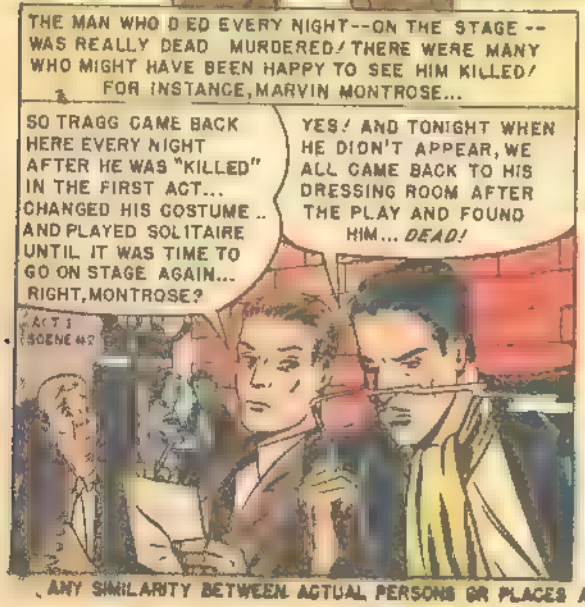
The Editors
Marvel Comic Group

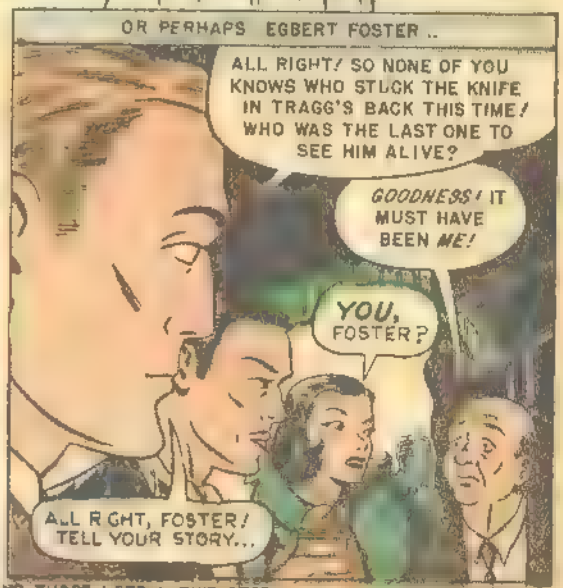
"MURDER SETS THE STAGE!"


IT'S UP TO YOU TO SEE THAT THE MURDERER IS BROUGHT TO JUSTICE! THIS MYSTERY IS BAFFLING, IMPOSSIBLE TO SOLVE, BUT IT'S GOT TO BE! THIS CRIME OF MURDER IN THE THEATER, OF SCHEMES AND PLOTS AND EVIL...IS IN YOUR HANDS! BRING ME THE KILLER!
YOU CAN'T BLAME ME! I'M IN THE CLEAR!
I DIDN'T LIKE THE GUY...BUT I WOULDN'T GO SO FAR AS TO KILL HIM!
MURDER? THE WORD MAKES ME SHIVER! NO... I'M NOT YOUR MAN!
I'M AFRAID, I TELL YOU... AFRAID... AS LONG AS THAT KILLER IS FREE!

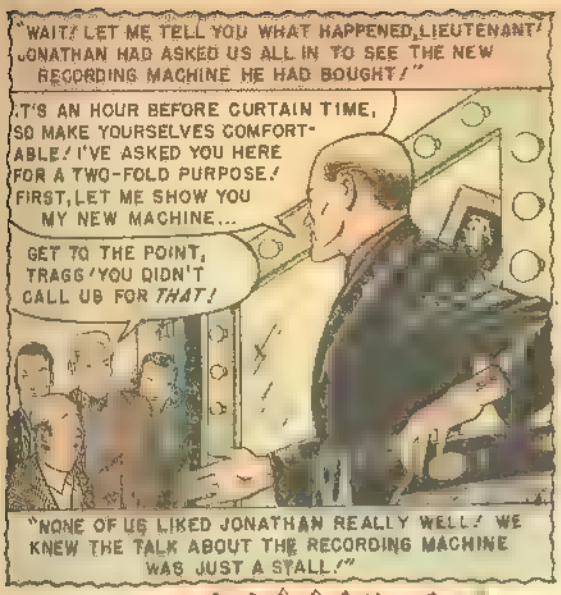
IT WAS THE TOP CASE IN THE CRIME FILE OF THE 5TH PRECINCT AND HEADQUARTERS ASSIGNED ITS ACE DETECTIVE TO SOLVE IT!

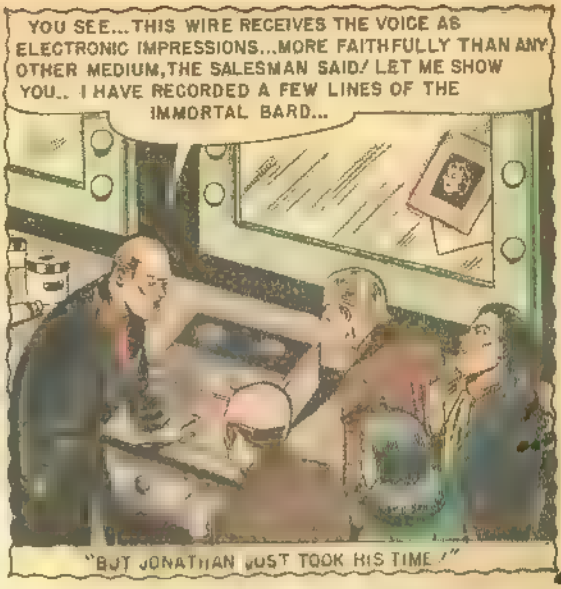
3721

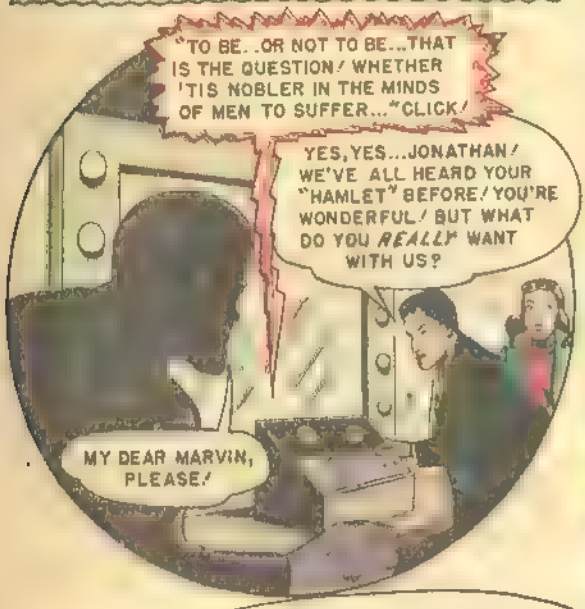

THE MAN WHO DIED EVERY NIGHT--ON THE STAGE -- WAS REALLY DEAD MURDERED! THERE WERE MANY WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN HAPPY TO SEE HIM KILLED! FOR INSTANCE, MARVIN MONTROSE...
SO TRAGG CAME BACK HERE EVERY NIGHT AFTER HE WAS "KILLED" IN THE FIRST ACT... CHANGED HIS COSTUME .. AND PLAYED SOLITAIRE UNTIL IT WAS TIME TO GO ON STAGE AGAIN... RIGHT, MONTROSE?
YES! AND TONIGHT WHEN HE DIDN'T APPEAR, WE ALL CAME BACK TO HIS DRESSING ROOM AFTER THE PLAY AND FOUND HIM... DEAD!
ACT I SCENE #2

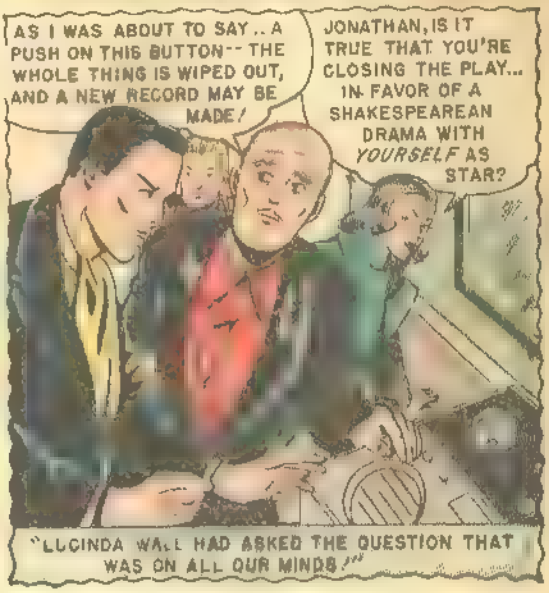

OR PERHAPS EGBERT FOSTER ..
ALL RIGHT! SO NONE OF YOU KNOWS WHO STUCK THE KNIFE IN TRAGG'S BACK THIS TIME! WHO WAS THE LAST ONE TO SEE HIM ALIVE?
GOODNESS! IT MUST HAVE BEEN ME!
YOU, FOSTER?
ALL RIGHT, FOSTER! TELL YOUR STORY...

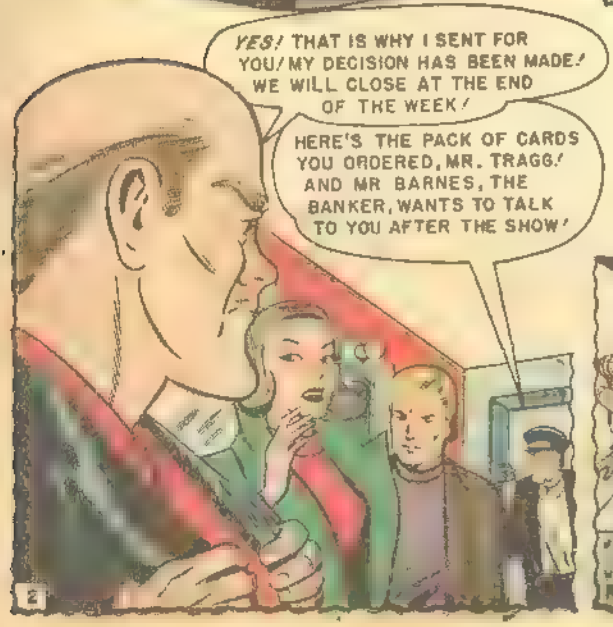
ANY SIMILARITY BETWEEN ACTUAL PERSONS OR PLACES AND THOSE USED IN THIS STORY IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL

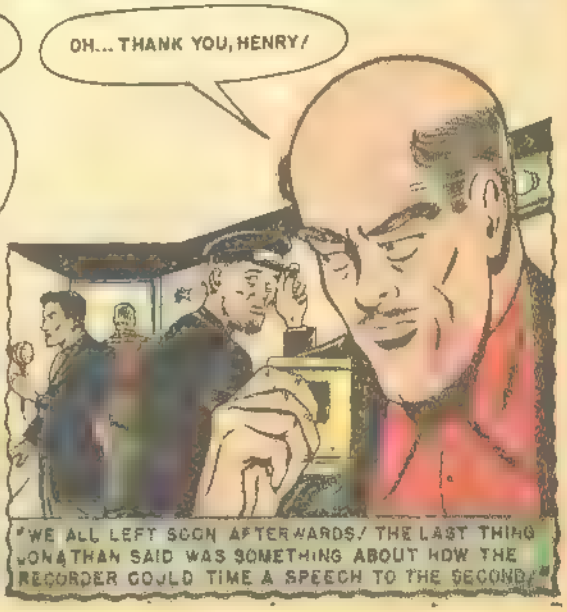

"WAIT! LET ME TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENED, LIEUTENANT! JONATHAN HAD ASKED US ALL IN TO SEE THE NEW RECORDING MACHINE HE HAD BOUGHT!"
IT'S AN HOUR BEFORE CURTAIN TIME, SO MAKE YOURSELVES COMFORTABLE! I'VE ASKED YOU HERE FOR A TWO-FOLD PURPOSE! FIRST, LET ME SHOW YOU MY NEW MACHINE...
GET TO THE POINT, TRAGG! YOU DIDN'T CALL US FOR *THAT*!
"NONE OF US LIKED JONATHAN REALLY WELL! WE KNEW THE TALK ABOUT THE RECORDING MACHINE WAS JUST A STALL!"


YOU SEE... THIS WIRE RECEIVES THE VOICE AS ELECTRONIC IMPRESSIONS... MORE FAITHFULLY THAN ANY OTHER MEDIUM, THE SALESMAN SAID! LET ME SHOW YOU.. I HAVE RECORDED A FEW LINES OF THE IMMORTAL BARD...
"BUT JONATHAN JUST TOOK HIS TIME!"

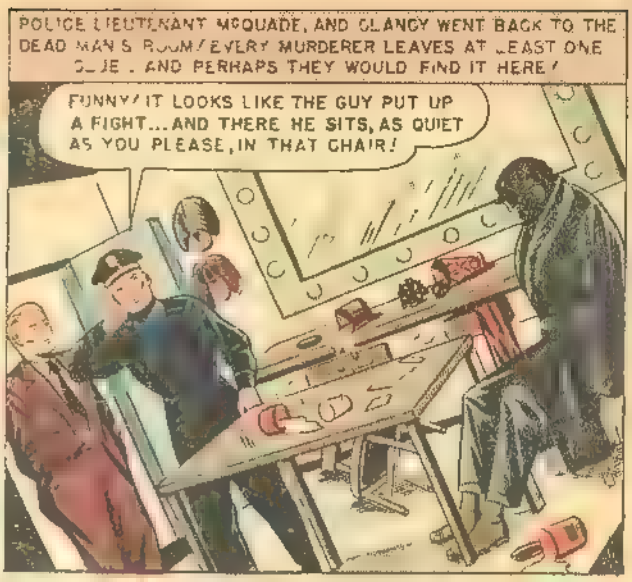

"TO BE..OR NOT TO BE...THAT IS THE QUESTION! WHETHER 'TIS NOBLER IN THE MINDS OF MEN TO SUFFER..." CLICK!
YES, YES... JONATHAN! WE'VE ALL HEARD YOUR "HAMLET" BEFORE! YOU'RE WONDERFUL! BUT WHAT DO YOU *REALLY* WANT WITH US?
MY DEAR MARVIN, PLEASE!


AS I WAS ABOUT TO SAY.. A PUSH ON THIS BUTTON-- THE WHOLE THING IS WIPED OUT, AND A NEW RECORD MAY BE MADE!
JONATHAN, IS IT TRUE THAT YOU'RE CLOSING THE PLAY... IN FAVOR OF A SHAKESPEAREAN DRAMA WITH *YOURSELF* AS STAR?
"LUCINDA WALL HAD ASKED THE QUESTION THAT WAS ON ALL OUR MINDS!"

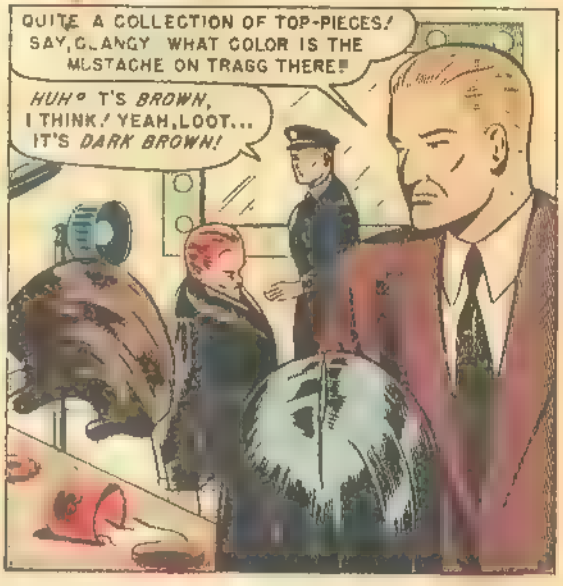

YES! THAT IS WHY I SENT FOR YOU! MY DECISION HAS BEEN MADE! WE WILL CLOSE AT THE END OF THE WEEK!
HERE'S THE PACK OF CARDS YOU ORDERED, MR. TRAGG! AND MR BARNES, THE BANKER, WANTS TO TALK TO YOU AFTER THE SHOW!
2


OH... THANK YOU, HENRY!
"WE ALL LEFT SOON AFTERWARDS! THE LAST THING JONATHAN SAID WAS SOMETHING ABOUT HOW THE RECORDER COULD TIME A SPEECH TO THE SECOND!"

...AND THAT'S ALL I KNOW!
OKAY, OKAY, FOSTER! TAKE IT EASY! COME ON, CLANCY! WE'LL TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THE MURDER SCENE! YOU FOLKS STICK AROUND! I MAY WANT MORE INFORMATION ON THIS SETUP!


POLICE LIEUTENANT McQUADE, AND CLANCY WENT BACK TO THE DEAD MAN'S ROOM! EVERY MURDERER LEAVES AT LEAST ONE CLUE . AND PERHAPS THEY WOULD FIND IT HERE!
FUNNY! IT LOOKS LIKE THE GUY PUT UP A FIGHT... AND THERE HE SITS, AS QUIET AS YOU PLEASE, IN THAT CHAIR!

HEY, *LOOK!* WAS HE CRAZY? LOOK! FIVE QUEENS, SIX JACKS, TWO ACES OF SPADES!
MMM! YES, IT'S A FUNNY KIND OF *SOLITAIRE!*

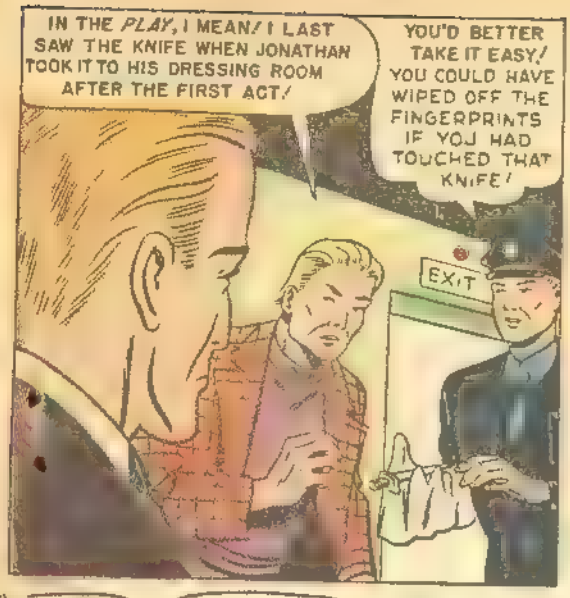

QUITE A COLLECTION OF TOP-PIECES! SAY, CLANCY WHAT COLOR IS THE MUSTACHE ON TRAGG THERE?
HUH? T'S *BROWN*, I THINK! YEAH, LOOT... IT'S *DARK BROWN!*

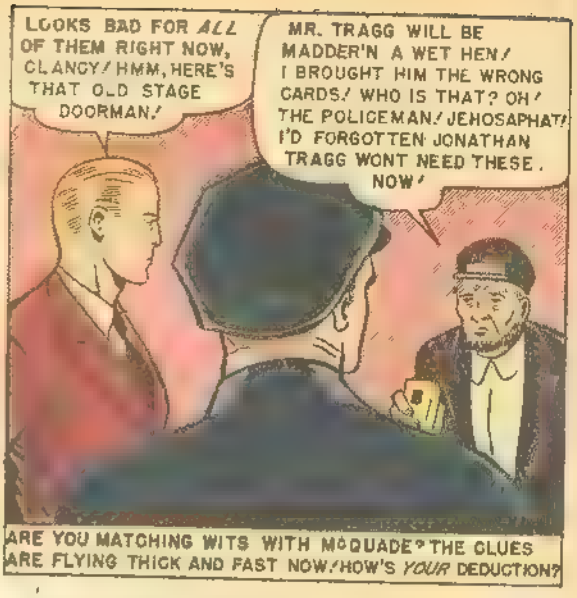
SO THIS IS THE NEW RECORDING MACHINE OF WHICH TRAGG WAS SO PROUD! YES, IT'S BEEN USED RECENTLY... WIRE FILINGS! SAY, CLANCY, CALL THAT GIRL IN HERE! I HAVE A FEW QUESTIONS!

HERE'S THE CORONER'S DOC, LIEUTENANT!
EGAD! THESE MOUNTAIN ROADS! THOUGHT I'D NEVER MAKE IT UP HERE! OLD MAN TRAGG, EH? SAW HIM IN "MACBETH" TWENTY YEARS AGO... WONDERFUL ACTOR... CAN'T IMAGINE HIM *DEAD!*

HERE'S THE WEAPON, LIEUTENANT! SEEMS TO BE A STAGE KNIFE! NO POSSIBILITY OF SUICIDE..
HMM...

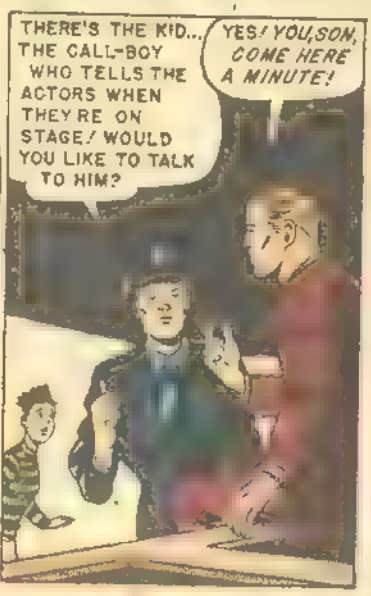
NOW, MISS WALL, THE STORY IS THAT JONATHAN TRAGG CONTROLLED THIS PLAY AND WAS PLANNING TO CLOSE IT.. TO PUT ON A SHAKESPEARIAN DRAMA STARRING HIMSELF!
THAT'S RIGHT, LIEUTENANT! BUT MUST WE TALK ABOUT THAT?
THEN McQUADE QUESTIONED LUCINDA WALL...
OH, WELL! I SUPPOSE YOU'LL FIND OUT! WE ALL HATED JONATHAN FOR HIS CONCEIT AND STUBBORNNESS! IN FOLDING THE PLAY, HE WAS LOSING US A CHANCE ON BROADWAY THIS WINTER! BUT... I'M SURE I DON'T KNOW WHO KILLED HIM!
GRACIOUS, LIEUTENANT! YOUR MAN DOESN'T HAVE TO BE SO ROUGH! I WASN'T RUNNING AWAY! I SUPPOSE I SHOULD HAVE SAT DOWN AND PLAYED SOLITAIRE! AH ER
OH, SO YOU PLAY SOLITAIRE, EH? LET HIM GO, CLANCY! HE CAN'T GET VERY FAR!
THIS GUY WAS TRYING TO LEAVE, LIEUTENANT!
SOLITAIRE? NO, DON'T LIKE CARD GAMES! AS FOR THAT TRAGG WELL, BELIEVE HE MADE A COMPLETE CHANGE OF COSTUME, PUT ON A MUSTACHE AND... SAY! THAT WIG ISN'T RIGHT!
YES, YES TURNER! THAT WILL BE ALL FOR NOW! JUST STICK AROUND!
T MONTROSE HAD AN OBSERVATION OF HIS OWN TO AID
ANOTHER ACTOR, LANE R, WAS NEXT TO BE QUESTIONED
COULDN'T HELP HEARING SOME OF YOUR TALK, McQUADE! CROSS ME OFF THE CARD-PLAYING LIST, TOO! AND DON'T ALL THE SLEUTHS TAKE FINGER-PRINTS? OF COURSE, YOU HICK COPS..
ALL RIGHT, CUT THE WISECRACKS, MONTROSE! I'LL TALK WITH YOU LATER! BRING THE REST OF THE CAST OVER HERE!
NO PRINTS LIEUTENANT! THE KILLER WAS CAREFUL!
THANKS, CLANCY! WELL, FOLKS, IT SEEMS FAIRLY CLEAR UP TO THIS POINT! TRAGG WAS MURDERED SOMETIME AFTER HE'D BEEN ON STAGE AND BEFORE HE FINISHED CHANGING FOR HIS SECOND APPEARANCE!
NOW CAN ANY OF YOU IDENTIFY THIS KNIFE?
YES, IT'S THE ONE USED IN THE PLAY! LET ME SHOW YOU... THE BLADE SLIDES BACK INTO THE HANDLE WHEN THAT BUTTON IS PRESSED! WELL, I... I KILLED HIM WITH IT!
WHAT THE?
4

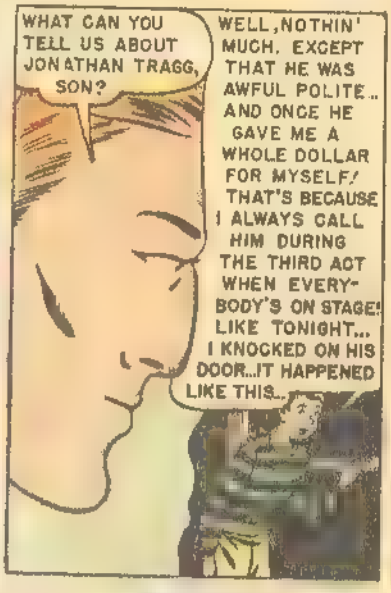

IN THE *PLAY*, I MEAN! I LAST SAW THE KNIFE WHEN JONATHAN TOOK IT TO HIS DRESSING ROOM AFTER THE FIRST ACT!
YOU'D BETTER TAKE IT EASY! YOU COULD HAVE WIPED OFF THE FINGERPRINTS IF YOU HAD TOUCHED THAT KNIFE!
EXIT


LOOKS BAD FOR *ALL* OF THEM RIGHT NOW, CLANCY! HMM, HERE'S THAT OLD STAGE DOORMAN!
MR. TRAGG WILL BE MADDER'N A WET HEN! I BROUGHT HIM THE WRONG CARDS! WHO IS THAT? OH! THE POLICEMAN! JEHOSAPHAT! I'D FORGOTTEN JONATHAN TRAGG WONT NEED THESE NOW!

ARE YOU MATCHING WITS WITH McQUADE? THE CLUES ARE FLYING THICK AND FAST NOW! HOW'S *YOUR* DEDUCTION?

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, POP! CALM DOWN! YEAH, WE FOUND THAT PINOCHLE DECK INSIDE! TRAGG WON'T BE PLAYING ANY MORE SOLITAIRE!
YOUR EYES ARE PRETTY BAD, POP, AREN'T THEY? BUT YOU'VE ALREADY SAID NO ONE COULD HAVE GONE IN OR OUT DURING THE PLAY BECAUSE YOU HAD THE DOOR LOCKED! WELL, JUST KEEP IT THAT WAY!

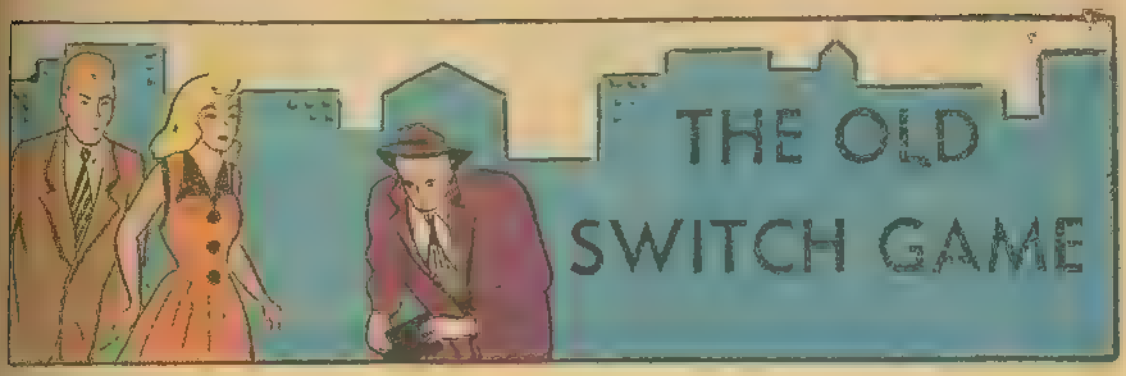

THERE'S THE KID... THE CALL-BOY WHO TELLS THE ACTORS WHEN THEY'RE ON STAGE! WOULD YOU LIKE TO TALK TO HIM?
YES! *YOU, SON, COME HERE A MINUTE!*


WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT JONATHAN TRAGG, SON?
WELL, NOTHIN' MUCH, EXCEPT THAT HE WAS AWFUL POLITE.. AND ONCE HE GAVE ME A WHOLE DOLLAR FOR MYSELF! THAT'S BECAUSE I ALWAYS CALL HIM DURING THE THIRD ACT WHEN EVERYBODY'S ON STAGE! LIKE TONIGHT... I KNOCKED ON HIS DOOR...IT HAPPENED LIKE THIS...

McQUADE IS CLOSE TO THE SOLUTION... ARE *YOU?*

THAT SETS IT, CLANCY! ROUND UP THAT CAST AGAIN! WE'RE GOING TO CONDUCT A LITTLE EXPERIMENT!
CHECK, LIEUTENANT!
WISH THEY'D GET THIS STUFF OVER WITH! THEY CAN'T BRING TRAGG BACK TO LIFE! I HAVE THINGS TO GET DONE!
GRACIOUS ME! I FORGOT ALL ABOUT SETTING THE STAGE! JUST LIKE IN ACT THREE! TELL THE... AH, GENTLEMEN, I'LL BE BACK!
NOW THEN...WHILE YOU WERE ALL ON STAGE DURING THE THIRD ACT, THE CALL BOY HERE CAME TO THIS DOOR...
COME, COME... LIEUTENANT, WHAT IS THIS FOOLISHNESS? ARE WE TO PLAY GAMES WITH A CHILD?
WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?
THEN THE EXPERIMENT BEGINS...
FIVE MINUTES, MR. TRAGG... FIVE MINUTES!
OH, THANK YOU, HENRY!
KNOCK! KNOCK!
NO! IT'S TRAGG'S VOICE I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE!
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE, BUDDY! HOLD STILL OR I'LL PUT THE CUFFS ON YOU!
JUST HOLD ON UNTIL HE CALMS DOWN, CLANCY! HE'S THE NERVOUS TYPE!
EXCEPT FOR ONE THING--THIS CASE IS CLOSED! BRING THEM ALL ALONG, CLANCY! WE'LL TIE UP THE LOOSE ENDS AND TAKE OUR KILLER DOWNTOWN!
YOU'VE GOT YOUR MAN, McQUADE! WHY CAN'T YOU LEAVE US ALONE? MISS WALL IS NEAR COLLAPSE!
AS I SAID, THERE ARE A COUPLE OF LOOSE ..UH!
LOOK OUT, LIEUTENANT!
EXIT
SCENE 3 ACT 4
SUDDENLY, A HEAVY SANDBAG DROPS DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO McQUADE!
6

THEY ALL LOOKED UP TO SEE..
COME DOWN FROM THERE, YOU! COME DOWN--FAST!
PLEASE! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! MY HAND SLIPPED AND THE BAG WAS TOO HEAVY FOR ME! PLEASE! I DIDN'T MEAN ANY HARM!
OH, IT'S YOU AGAIN! GET OVER THERE-- AND STAY PUT!
PLEASE, LIEUTENANT! CAN'T WE LEAVE NOW? THIS HAS BEEN A GREAT STRAIN! AFTER ALL YOU SAID THE CASE IS CLOSED!
NOT QUITE, MISS WALL! NOT QUITE UMMM! BUT SOON!
WET PAINT
SAY, YOU FOLKS MUST HAVE BRUSHED AGAINST THAT RED PAINT BACK THERE! YOU'VE A STAIN ON YOUR SLEEVE, MONTROSE!
WHAT-- ME?
WET PAINT
LOOKS LIKE BLOOD-- DOESN'T IT, MONTROSE?
B-BLOOD? ER HOW DID THE RED, ER...
THAT'S NOT RED! IT'S BROWN!
RIGHT! AND MONTROSE THOUGHT IT WAS RED! GRAB HIM, CLANCY!
THAT WAS A SMART TRICK, MONTROSE--USING TRAGG'S VOICE CAREFULLY TIMED TO COME OUT OF THE RECORDING MACHINE JUST AS THE CALL BOY KNOCKED ON THE DOOR! AND NOT SO SMART TO SET UP A SOLITAIRE HAND--USING PINOCHLE CARDS! YOUR COLOR BLINDNESS TIPPED ME OFF THAT YOU HAD MATCHED THE RED WIG WITH TRAGG'S BROWN MUSTACHE! WELL, YOUR NEXT STARRING ROLE WILL BE A SHORT ONE, TOO-- IN THE CHAIR!



IT IS one of the oldest confidence games. You wonder how it is possible for any person to fall for it. Known to "con" men as the "switch game," it has many varieties. The basic idea is to get the victim to give the crook money, which is switched for strips of paper. We are now going to observe how a confidence man operates with this crooked set-up. The facts are taken from a recent true case. Only the names are fictitious.

This is the sad story of Mrs. Helen Doe, who worked as a secretary in a large department store. She has lost a lot of money and is by now, a much wiser woman. She was taking a walk, having just left the store. A well dressed man came up to her and in the most courteous manner, asked her whether she could direct him to a beauty parlor where his sister expected to meet him. His manner was disarming and what could a polite person do but answer. He said he did not know his way around the town because he and his sister were new in this section of the country.

Mrs. Doe told him she did not know where the beauty parlor was located. A conversation took place. As they were talking, another man came down the street, bent down, and picked up a wallet from the sidewalk in front of the two people. Then the man who was talking to Mrs. Doe swung into action. "We saw you pick up the wallet." No words of argument followed for the man who had found the wallet offered to share its contents with the other two. The three started walking and then entered a black car. They drove to a nearby parking lot. The man who said he had "found" the wallet then revealed it had a good deal of money in it. He said he wanted his boss, whom Mrs. Doe said he mentioned had reared him since he was an orphan, to share in the new wealth. He left the car, assuring both he would return. Several minutes later he rushed up to the car breathless, and gasped, "Boy, have we hit it rich! You know what was in that wallet? $13,000!" Mrs. Doe told the police that a discussion followed in which the "finder" of the wallet protested about including a woman in the sharing of the money. That might arouse suspicion. She protested and the "finder" declared that if she were in poor circumstances, she would doubtless squander her share of the money quickly. In discussing her financial position, she admitted she had money in the bank and even showed her bank book. It was suggested that she draw out some money. The two of them went to the Savings Bank in the vicinity and she drew out two thousand dollars.

On the way back, she was informed that the "finder" had left the wallet and its contents in the office of his employer for safe keeping. When they returned to the parked automobile, her companion told the other man that everything was o. k. He then told her he would put her money in an envelope for her, so that it would be safe until after she had received her share of the contents of the wallet. In front of her, he sealed her money in the envelope and handed it to her. It was suggested that they go separately and meet at the employer's office on Main Street. The reason for going separately was to avoid arousing suspicion. She went there alone

and found only a store at that address. It was closed and she waited till someone returned from lunch. In response to her questions, she learned that no person answered her description worked there.

Immediately she opened the envelope and found pieces of newspaper in place of her money. Hysterical, she rushed to the bank, screaming, "I've been robbed." The police were summoned and listened to her story. She described the two men to them and even examined photographs in the Rogues Gallery.

I know your reaction. You are blinking and wondering how anyone could fall for this switch game. Isn't it possible that you might do the same thing, if you never heard about the racket? In fact we are going to let you be the victim in a variation of this switch game.

At lunch time you are walking down Main Street headed for the restaurant. You are thinking about your girl and wondering how you could get money into your bank account. Just then you collide with a stranger. "Pardon me," he says, and you nod your head. It was your fault. "Pardon me," he repeats, "but I think you just dropped your wallet." While you are trying to collect your thoughts, he picks it up. He looks at the name inside. "Are you Henry Weber?" he inquires. "No," you reply and are about to walk away, when he makes an interesting comment. "I am going to open the zipper and see what is inside." Before you can reply, he does this, and there is a whole wad of bills, each looking like a hundred dollar one. "My car is parked over there," he whispers, "lets go in and talk this thing over." You are so excited about the thought of getting extra money that you follow him into a sedan at the curb. "There's a telephone number next to Mr. Weber's name," he admits to you. "Thank goodness we are both honest men or we would keep this fortune. I am going to drive to the nearest telephone booth, there's a drug store around the corner." He hands you the wallet which you know is stuffed with hundred dollar bills. He starts the motor, and a few minutes later he stops in front of a drug store. "Come with me," he suggests, and you both stop in front of an empty booth. He enters, but leaves the door partly open, so you can see him dial the number that was inside the wallet. A voice evidently answers. Your new friend replies, "This is Frank Busterfeet, the importer." Seems the person on the other end has heard about your well known acquaintance. Mr. Busterfeet continues, "I was walking down Main Street with a friend when he found your wallet." That sounds wonderful for he is giving you the credit. "What!" you hear your acquaintance say, "You are going to give him a reward. Bet he could use that extra money. We'll be there as soon as you say."

He turns to you and remarks, "He is a famous motion picture star. Of course you have heard about Henry Weber?" Do you admit your ignorance? Certainly not and you nod your head. "Let's have dinner first. Then we can drive over to Mr. Weber. He is having an important conference." Then his face changes. "I never realized you had the wallet all this time. Shows how I trust you. You could have walked away with it." This makes you feel fine and then he adds, "But do you trust me?" This upsets you a trifle and he makes the following suggestion. "It may not be a bad idea to have some extra cash on you. Say about three hundred dollars when we get there. In addition to the reward, Mr. Weber said something about letting you in on a deal." You produce your bank book. Ten minutes later you have drawn money out.

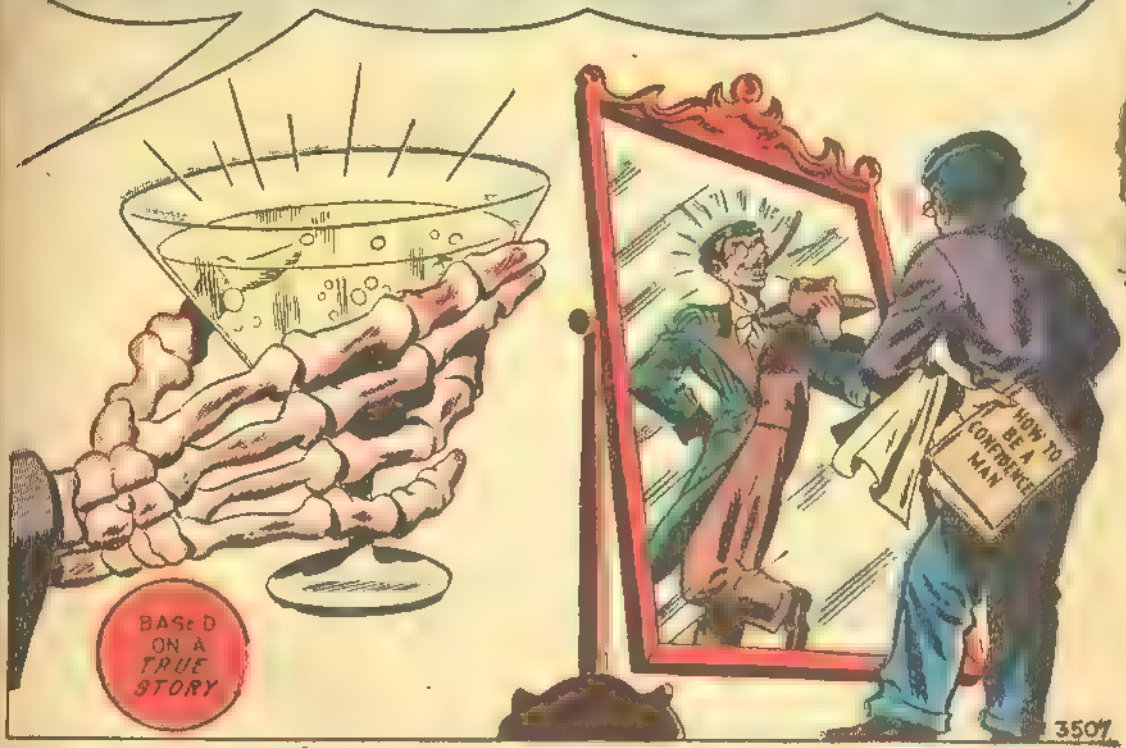
Your friend suggests that you put it into an envelope which he hands to you. You do this and he takes the wallet from you and places it around the envelope. You take both from him and inside your coat pocket they go. He tells you to wait for him in the car, as he wants to speak to a friend.

You wait and wait. You could stay there until doomsday. He went out the side entrance, the car is stolen, and he switched wallets and envelopes on you. Inside both you find only strips of paper. You tell your story of woe to the police. They listen very carefully. Advice? Never trust anyone with your money!

THE END

I DRINK A TOAST TO LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK! WHY? HE'S JUST A SIMPLE WAITER, BUT HE'S EMBARKING ON A PATH THAT WILL LEAD HIM STRAIGHT TO *ME!* HE'S A DESPERATE, RIDICULOUS LITTLE MAN WITH A PLAN... A PLAN TO LIFT HIM (HE THINKS) ABOVE THE RANK OF ORDINARY MORTALS! BECAUSE LITTLEJOHN THOUGHT OF HIMSELF AS A CONFIDENCE MAN.. ONE WHO LIVED AS A HUMAN SCAVENGER FROM THE SAVINGS OF OTHERS! BUT HE WAS HEADING STRAIGHT FOR ME EVEN BEFORE HE BEGAN, BECAUSE...OH, BUT YOU WOULDN'T FORGIVE ME IF I GAVE THIS STORY AWAY! YOU'VE GOT TO SEE FOR YOURSELF WHAT HAPPENED WHEN DEATH ORDERED..

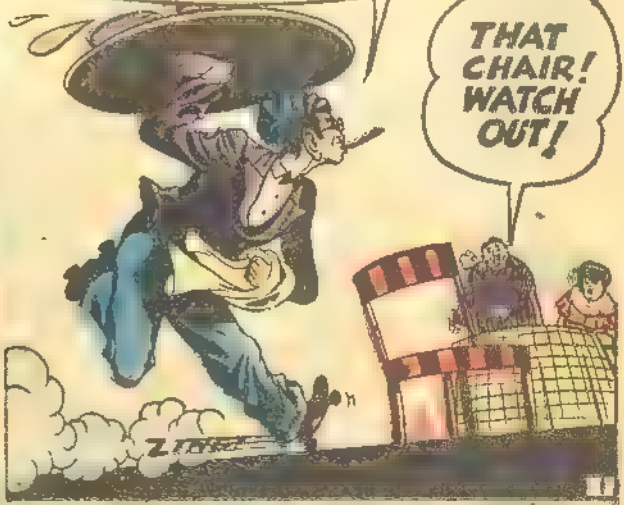
"WAITER! CRIME, PLEASE!"



IN A MID-WESTERN CITY, LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK WENT ABOUT HIS JOB AS WAITER IN THE PINEAPPLE ROOM OF THE HOTEL AVOCADO, A PLACE THAT FEATURED A NOVELTY--*WAITER-ON SKATES!*

AH, HERE WE ARE, MADAM-- JUST AS YOU ORDERED, ROASTED YOUNG CHICKEN, IN A SAUCE OF STEAMING HOT MUSHROOMS!

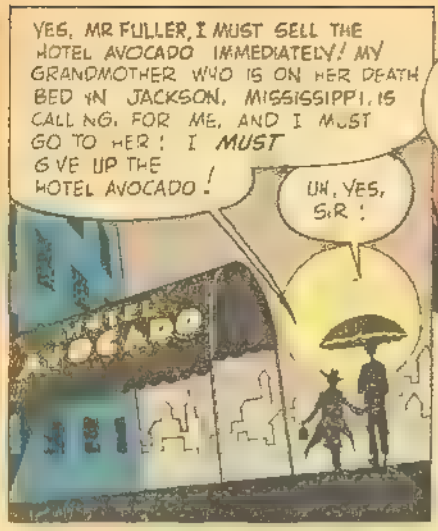
THAT CHAIR! WATCH OUT!

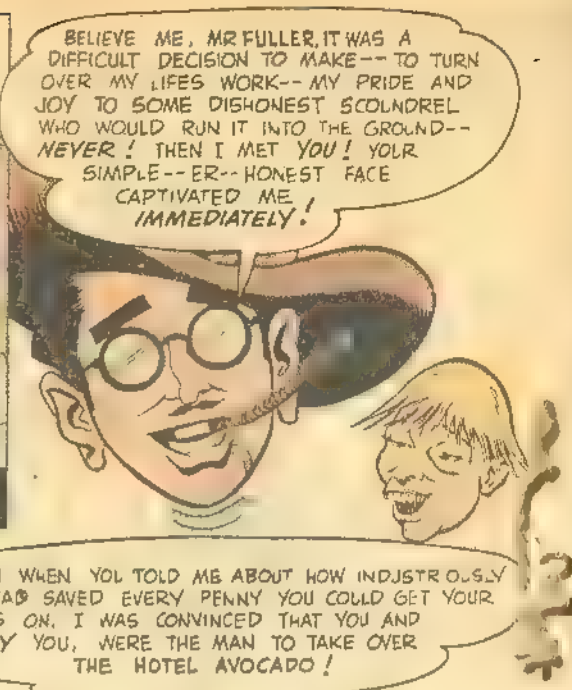


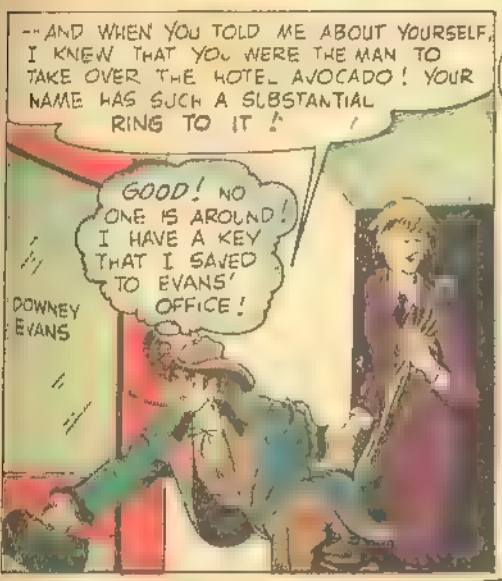
ANY SIMILARITY BETWEEN ACTUAL PERSONS OR PLACES AND THOSE USED IN THIS STORY IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL

WOOPS!
YEOW!
IN HIS PRIVATE OFFICE, DOWNEY EVANS, MANAGER OF THE HOTEL AVOCADO WAS ATTRACTED BY THE TREMENDOUS NOISE!
THERE IS THAT BUTTER-FINGERED IDIOT, LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK, PLAYING HAVOC WITH THE DISHES AGAIN!
CRASH
DOWNEY
AGAIN?
ONE MORE DISH DROPPING INCIDENT, AND OUT YOU GO!
DISHES! DISHES! DISHES! THEY HAVE MADE MY LIFE MISERABLE! IT'S A CRIME THAT I, WITH MY FINE SENSITIVE SPIRIT AM SUBJECTED TO SUCH HUMILIATION! SURELY I WAS CUT OUT FOR BETTER THINGS THAN THIS!
STOP THIS STALLING, PRASNAK! CHANGE THAT DICKEY AND GET OUT ON THE FLOOR! AND FOR HEAVENS SAKE-- WATCH THOSE DISHES!
AND THOUGH HE WAS CLUMSY THE MIND OF LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK REBELLED AT HIS WAY OF LIFE...
BUT IN HIS HURRY TO OBEY HIS EMPLOYER PRASNAK TURNED QUICKLY AND...
OHMH!
THIS IS YOUR LAST STUPID ACT, PRASNAK! YOU'RE FIRED!! TURN IN YOUR TRAY AND GET OUT-T-T!
I'M GOING, DOWNEY EVANS, BUT YOU WILL PAY FOR THE COUNTLESS HUMILIATIONS YOU HAVE FORCED ME TO SUFFER! THE WHOLE WORLD WILL PAY!
2
THE COUNTLESS HUMILIATIONS OF THE DAY WERE TOO MUCH FOR PRASNAK AND HE HURLED OUT AN IMPASSIONED THREAT!

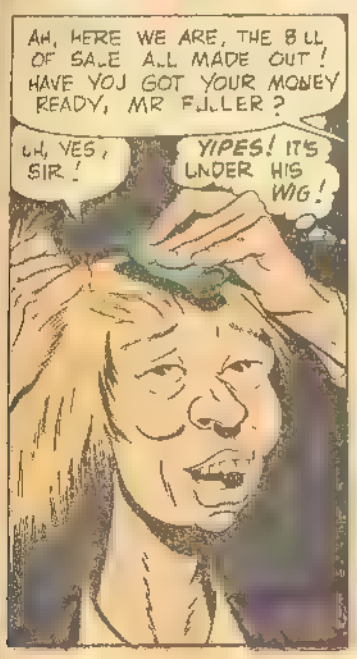
LATE ONE NIGHT SEVERAL WEEKS LATER, LITTLE JOHN PRASNAK, WATER NO MORE BUT NOW PROSPEROUSLY TAILORED, COULD HAVE BEEN FOUND ESCORTING HIS FIRST VICTIM TOWARD THE HOTEL AVOCADO, PRASNAK'S FORMER PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT!


YES, MR FULLER, I MUST SELL THE HOTEL AVOCADO IMMEDIATELY! MY GRANDMOTHER WHO IS ON HER DEATH BED IN JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, IS CALLING FOR ME, AND I MUST GO TO HER! I MUST GIVE UP THE HOTEL AVOCADO!
UH, YES, SIR!

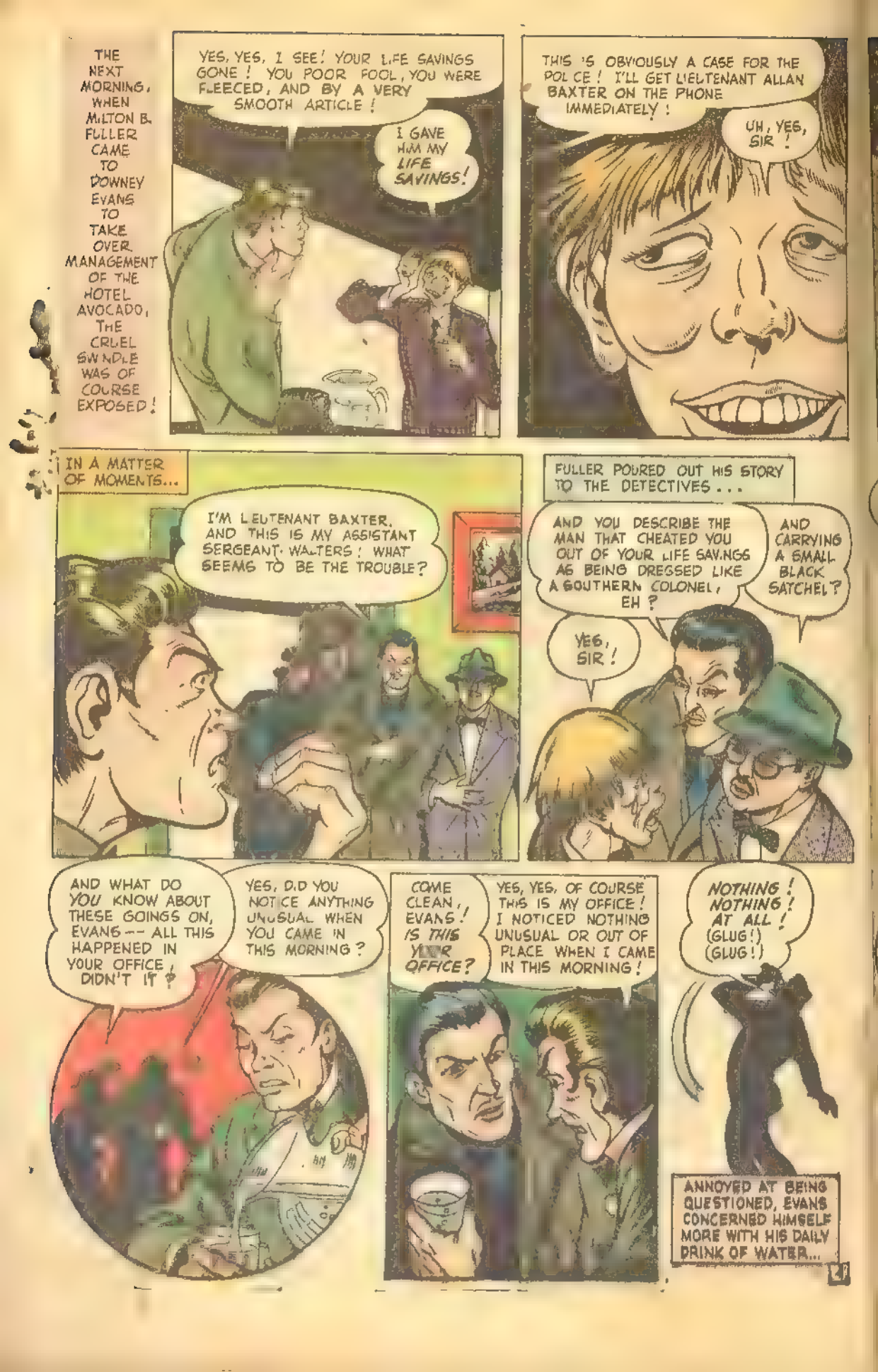

BELIEVE ME, MR FULLER, IT WAS A DIFFICULT DECISION TO MAKE -- TO TURN OVER MY LIFES WORK -- MY PRIDE AND JOY TO SOME DISHONEST SCOUNDREL WHO WOULD RUN IT INTO THE GROUND -- NEVER! THEN I MET YOU! YOUR SIMPLE -- ER -- HONEST FACE CAPTIVATED ME IMMEDIATELY!


-- AND WHEN YOU TOLD ME ABOUT YOURSELF, I KNEW THAT YOU WERE THE MAN TO TAKE OVER THE HOTEL AVOCADO! YOUR NAME HAS SUCH A SUBSTANTIAL RING TO IT!
GOOD! NO ONE IS AROUND! I HAVE A KEY THAT I SAVED TO EVANS' OFFICE!
DOWNEY EVANS

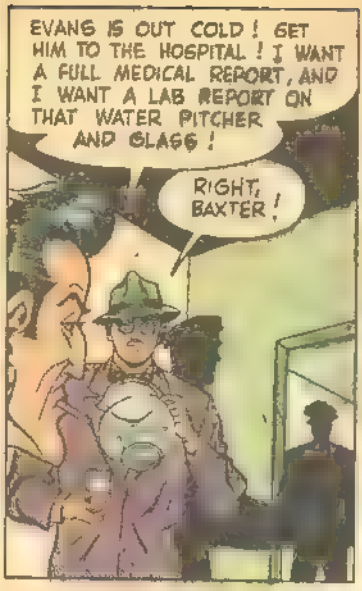
THEN WHEN YOU TOLD ME ABOUT HOW INDUSTRIOUSLY YOU HAD SAVED EVERY PENNY YOU COULD GET YOUR HANDS ON, I WAS CONVINCED THAT YOU AND ONLY YOU, WERE THE MAN TO TAKE OVER THE HOTEL AVOCADO!
UH, YES SIR!

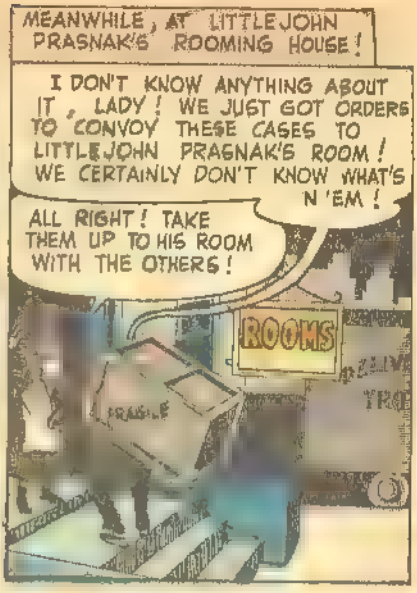


YOU MAY TAKE OVER OWNERSHIP IN THE MORNING! I HAVE SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS YET TO TAKE CARE OF HERE! GOOD NIGHT, AND GOOD LUCK!
UH -- YES, SIR!

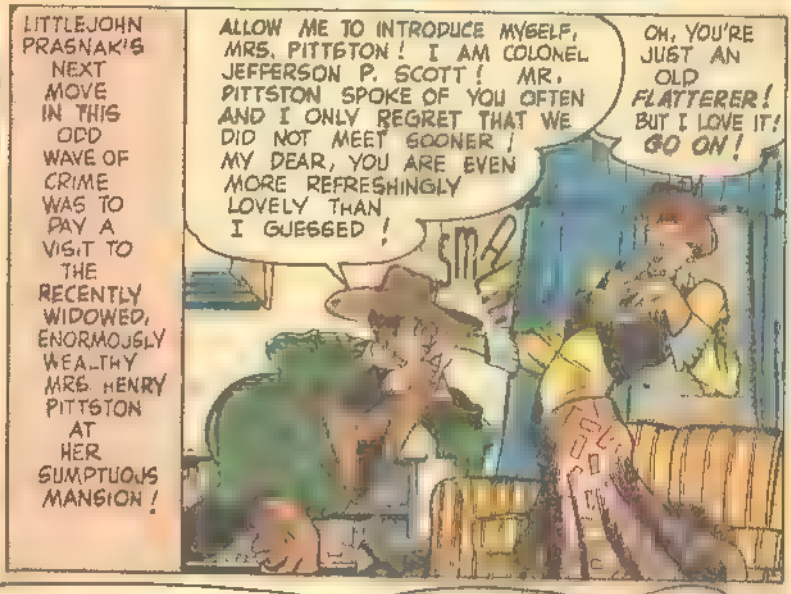

THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN MILTON B. FULLER CAME TO DOWNEY EVANS TO TAKE OVER MANAGEMENT OF THE HOTEL AVOCADO, THE CRUEL SWINDLE WAS OF COURSE EXPOSED!
YES, YES, I SEE! YOUR LIFE SAVINGS GONE! YOU POOR FOOL, YOU WERE FLEECED, AND BY A VERY SMOOTH ARTICLE!
I GAVE HIM MY LIFE SAVINGS!
THIS 'S OBVIOUSLY A CASE FOR THE POLICE! I'LL GET LIEUTENANT ALLAN BAXTER ON THE PHONE IMMEDIATELY!
UH, YES, SIR!
IN A MATTER OF MOMENTS...
I'M LEUTENANT BAXTER, AND THIS IS MY ASSISTANT SERGEANT WALTERS! WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TROUBLE?
FULLER POURED OUT HIS STORY TO THE DETECTIVES...
AND YOU DESCRIBE THE MAN THAT CHEATED YOU OUT OF YOUR LIFE SAVINGS AS BEING DRESSED LIKE A SOUTHERN COLONEL, EH?
AND CARRYING A SMALL BLACK SATCHEL?
YES, SIR!
AND WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THESE GOINGS ON, EVANS -- ALL THIS HAPPENED IN YOUR OFFICE, DIDN'T IT?
YES, DID YOU NOTICE ANYTHING UNUSUAL WHEN YOU CAME IN THIS MORNING?
COME CLEAN, EVANS! IS THIS YOUR OFFICE?
YES, YES, OF COURSE THIS IS MY OFFICE! I NOTICED NOTHING UNUSUAL OR OUT OF PLACE WHEN I CAME IN THIS MORNING!
NOTHING! NOTHING! AT ALL! (GLUG!) (GLUG!)
ANNOYED AT BEING QUESTIONED, EVANS CONCERNED HIMSELF MORE WITH HIS DAILY DRINK OF WATER...

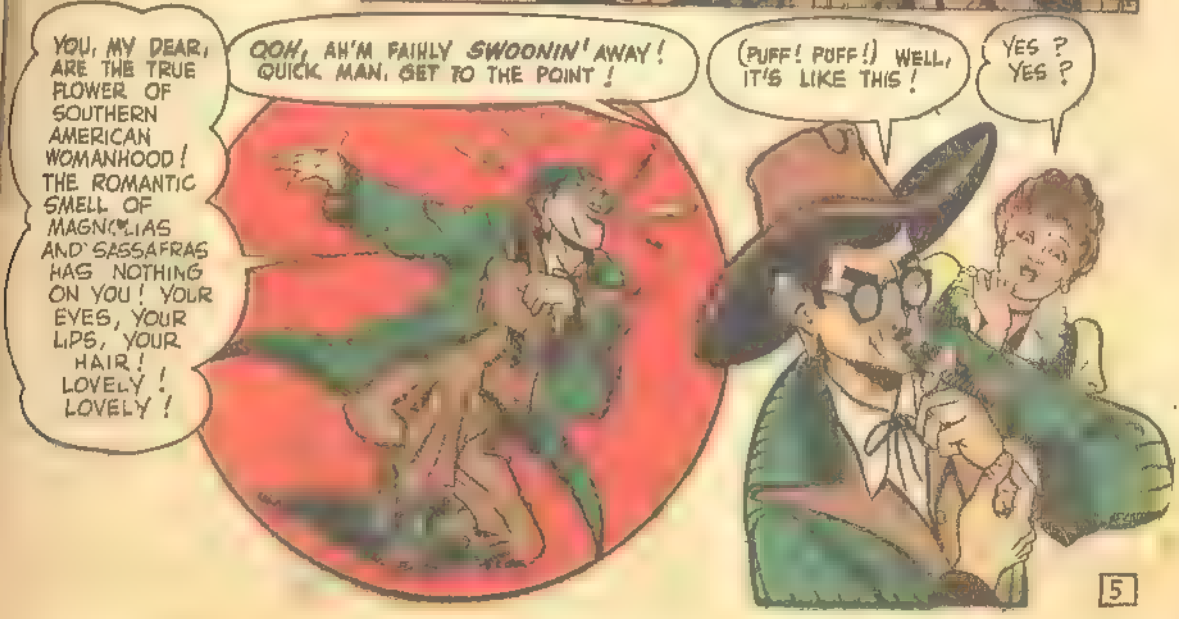
WHEN SUDDENLY,


EVANS IS OUT COLD! GET HIM TO THE HOSPITAL! I WANT A FULL MEDICAL REPORT, AND I WANT A LAB REPORT ON THAT WATER PITCHER AND GLASS!
RIGHT, BAXTER!


MEANWHILE, AT LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK'S ROOMING HOUSE!
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT, LADY! WE JUST GOT ORDERS TO CONVOY THESE CASES TO LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK'S ROOM! WE CERTAINLY DON'T KNOW WHAT'S N 'EM!
ALL RIGHT! TAKE THEM UP TO HIS ROOM WITH THE OTHERS!
ROOMS
FRAGILE

WHAT'S IN THEM BOXES ANYHOW? THEY'VE BEEN COMIN' IN ALL WEEK... AND HIS OUTLANDISH DRESSIN'! HE'S BEEN ACTIN' MIGHTY PECULIAR LATELY... I'D BETTER TALK TO HIM!


LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK'S NEXT MOVE IN THIS ODD WAVE OF CRIME WAS TO PAY A VISIT TO THE RECENTLY WIDOWED, ENORMOUSLY WEALTHY MRS. HENRY PITTSTON AT HER SUMPTUOUS MANSION!
ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF, MRS. PITTSTON! I AM COLONEL JEFFERSON P. SCOTT! MR. PITTSTON SPOKE OF YOU OFTEN AND I ONLY REGRET THAT WE DID NOT MEET SOONER! MY DEAR, YOU ARE EVEN MORE REFRESHINGLY LOVELY THAN I GUESSED!
OH, YOU'RE JUST AN OLD FLATTERER! BUT I LOVE IT! GO ON!


YOU, MY DEAR, ARE THE TRUE FLOWER OF SOUTHERN AMERICAN WOMANHOOD! THE ROMANTIC SMELL OF MAGNOLIAS AND SASSAFRAS HAS NOTHING ON YOU! YOUR EYES, YOUR LIPS, YOUR HAIR! LOVELY! LOVELY!
OOH, AH'M FAIRLY SWOONIN' AWAY! QUICK, MAN, GET TO THE POINT!
(PUFF! PUFF!) WELL, IT'S LIKE THIS!
YES? YES?

I REPRESENT YOUR LATE HUSBAND'S FAVORITE CHARITY... THE SOCIETY FOR THE ADVOCATION OF THE REPLACEMENT OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S PICTURE ON FIVE DOLLAR BILLS WITH A PICTURE OF GENERAL ROBERT E LEE! AND I HAVE COME FOR THE ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION!

WHY, BLESS YOU, COLONEL SCOTT! YOU'RE AN OLE DEAH! O' COURSE AH'LL GIVE YOU A NICE CHECK...

I THANK YOU MOST GRACIOUSLY, MA'AM!

THE LONELY, WEALTHY W DOW FELL COMPLETELY UNDER THE CHARMS OF THE WILY PRASNAK...

...IN MEMORY OF DEAH, DEPARTED HENRY! (SOB! SOB!)

PLEASE DON'T CRY, MY DEAR!

OH, AH'M SO UNSTRUNG, COLONEL SCOTT! YOUR TALK BRINGS BACK MEMORIES OF MY HUSBAND... AND MY COURTSHIP DAYS! WE WERE SO MUCH IN LOVE!

AH'M SORRY AH CAN'T SEE YOU TO THE DOOR, COLONEL SCOTT, BUT AH'M SO UPSET! SAY HELLO TO EVERYONE FOR ME! GOOD DAY!

I'LL DO THAT, GOOD DAY!

LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK, LEFT ALONE IN THE ROOM, AND STILL NOT SATISFIED WITH THE GRIEF HE HAD CAUSED MRS. HENRY PITTSTON, COMMITTED STILL ANOTHER BRUTALITY--OF A VERY CURIOUS NATURE!

REVENGE! REVENGE! I AM GETTING MY REVENGE!

CRASH!

BACK AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS...

WELL, THAT'S THE LAST OF THE ROGUE'S GALLERY PHOTOS! YOU CAN'T IDENTIFY ANY OF THESE CRIMINALS AS THE ONE WHO SWINDLED YOU OUT OF YOUR LIFE SAVINGS! RIGHT, FULLER?

NO, SIR!

EVANS DRANK WATER THAT HAD GROUND GLASS IN IT! HE'LL RECOVER! AND THE LAB REPORTS THAT GROUND GLASS WAS FOUND IN THE WATER PITCHER!

WELL, AT LAST WE'RE MOVING! THERE'S THE PHONE!

HOT ON THE TRAIL, BAXTER AND WALTERS RUSHED TO MRS. PITTSTON'S HOME...

MRS. PITTSTON SOUNDED VERY UPSET! SHE SAYS THAT SHE'S BEEN SWINDLED BY A PHONY, POSING AS A SOUTHERN COLONEL! SHE REALIZED THAT SHE'D BEEN CHISELED WHEN THE REAL COLONEL JEFFERSON SCOTT SHOWED UP WITH PAPERS TO PROVE IT!

HMMM... ANOTHER SOUTHERN COLONEL TYPE OF SWINDLER! MAYBE THAT GLASS LEAD WILL TURN UP HERE, TOO!

IN MRS. PITTSTON'S HOME, THE DETECTIVES START QUESTIONING...

AND THAT'S ALL I KNOW!

WHAT ARE YOU SWEEPING UP THERE, BUTLER?

BROKEN GLASSES, SIR! AFTER THAT FIRST COLONEL SCOTT LEFT, I CAME IN AND FOUND THE COCKTAIL TABLE TURNED OVER! I'M JUST SWEEPING IT UP NOW, SIR!

LATER, AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, DETECTIVES BAXTER AND WALTERS LOOKED OVER A GLOOMY SET OF FACTS!

TWO SWINDLE CASES AND ONE ATTEMPTED MURDER AND ALL WITH THE SAME CLUES -- BROKEN GLASS, AND THE SUSPECT DRESSED UP LIKE A SOUTHERN COLONEL! BUT WHAT'S OUR NEXT MOVE?

WHICH WAY DO WE TURN?

WE'RE ON THE RIGHT TRAIL SOMETHING MUST BREAK SOON!

POLICE HEADQUARTERS

SERGEANT WALTERS SPOKE PROPHETICALLY, FOR IN ANOTHER PART OF TOWN AT LITTLE JOHN PRASNAK'S ROOMING HOUSE...

YOU'VE BEEN ACTIN' MIGHTY STRANGE LATELY, MR. PRASNAK. DRESSIN' UP IN THIS FANCY OUTFIT, GETTIN' THOSE BIG BOXES FULL OF SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS, KEEPIN' YOUR LIGHT ON ALL NIGHT! NOW WHAT'S GOIN' ON? I'VE GOT A RIGHT TO KNOW!

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS YOU OLD BUSYBODY! I'M GOING UP TO MY ROOM NOW AND KEEP MY LIGHT ON ALL NIGHT! DON'T YOU OR ANYBODY ELSE DISTURB ME! DO YOU HEAR?

THE CHARMING PERSONALITY OF PRASNAK HAD ADAPTED, COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED AND HE HURLED VICIOUS WORDS AT HIS LANDLADY!

A SHORT WHILE LATER, THE LANDLADY, ATTRACTED BY THE NOISE COMING FROM PRASNAK'S ROOM, DECIDED TO CALL IN THE POLICE...

THAT PRASNAK'S GONE CRAZY! I BETTER CALL THE POLICE!

MINUTES LATER, TWO POLICE CARS WERE SCREAMING THROUGH CITY STREETS... DESTINATION, LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK'S ROOMING HOUSE!
WALTERS, THIS LOOKS LIKE THE BREAK WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR! FROM MRS. HARGER'S DESCRIPTION OF WHAT'S GOING ON AND WHAT THIS GUY LOOKS LIKE, I THINK THIS IS THE BOY WE WANT!
WE'LL SOON FIND OUT, BAXTER!
EEE!
HE'S IN THERE!
OPEN UP, PRASNAK! WE KNOW WHO YOU ARE! OPEN UP OR WE'LL SMASH THE DOOR DOWN!
ONLY MAD SCREAMING AND STILL MORE NOISE GREETED BAXTER'S ORDERS!
OKAY, MEN! SMASH THE DOOR DOWN!
EEEEE!
THE DOOR FINALLY BROKEN DOWN, AN AMAZING SIGHT GREETED THE DETECTIVES' EYES...
I AM GETTING MY REVENGE! I HATE DISHES! I HAVE SPENT ALL MY MONEY ON VERY EXPENSIVE DISHES SO I COULD HAVE THE SWEET PLEASURE OF SMASHING THEM! HAW! HAW! HAW!
CRASH!
YES, THE DEMENTED MIND OF LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK HAD APPARENTLY SNAPPED COMPLETELY!
OKAY, PRASNAK, THIS IS THE END OF THE ROAD FOR YOU!
I DON'T CARE! HO! HA! HO!
LATER, AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK WAS DEFINITELY IDENTIFIED BY HIS INNOCENT VICTIMS AS THEIR SWINDLER!
THEN YOU DEFINITELY IDENTIFY PRASNAK AS THE CROOK WHO SWINDLED YOU OUT OF YOUR LIFE SAVINGS! IS THAT RIGHT?
YES, SIR, THAT'S HIM!
LITTLEJOHN PRASNAK WAS SENT TO THE PENITENTIARY FOR A LONG SENTENCE...
YOU CAN'T SMASH THESE DISHES, PRASNAK! THESE ARE MADE OF METAL!
AND AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, HE WAS ASSIGNED TO THE PRISON KITCHEN... TO WASH DISHES!

"DISGUISE for TERROR!"

HE WAS A SOURCE OF TROUBLE TO THE POLICE OF TWO CONTINENTS! HIS TRAIL OF LARCENY AND DOUBLE-CROSS LED INTO THE HOMES OF THE WEALTHY AND THE HOVELS OF THE POOR. DO YOU WANT TO WATCH HOW A CONFIDENCE MAN WORKS? HOW, LIKE A CHAMELEON, HE CHANGES HIS PERSONALITY, TO FIT THE SITUATION? HERE IS THE STORY OF AN ARCH VILLAIN, A CROOK, SMOOTH AS SILK, TREACHEROUS AS A WOLF, AND DEADLY AS A POISONED DAGGER!

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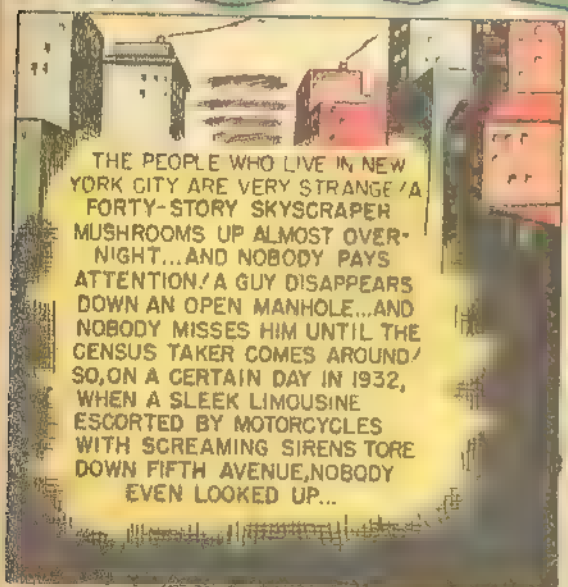

THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN NEW YORK CITY ARE VERY STRANGE! A FORTY-STORY SKYSCRAPER MUSHROOMS UP ALMOST OVER-NIGHT...AND NOBODY PAYS ATTENTION! A GUY DISAPPEARS DOWN AN OPEN MANHOLE...AND NOBODY MISSES HIM UNTIL THE CENSUS TAKER COMES AROUND! SO, ON A CERTAIN DAY IN 1932, WHEN A SLEEK LIMOUSINE ESCORTED BY MOTORCYCLES WITH SCREAMING SIRENS TORE DOWN FIFTH AVENUE, NOBODY EVEN LOOKED UP...

THAT IS, NOBODY BUT A COUPLE OF CYNICAL STREET CLEANERS...
HEY, LOUIE! LOOK AT 'EM GO! JUST LOOK AT 'EM! BOY! THOSE BIG SHOTS MUST CLEAN UP!
SO WHAT? WE CLEAN UP TOO, BUT IT ISN'T THE SAME!
EEEE!

ANY SIMILARITY BETWEEN ACTUAL PERSONS OR PLACES AND THOSE USED IN THIS STORY IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL.

NOW AS EVERYONE KNOWS, A MOTORCYCLE ESCORT IS PROVIDED IN EMERGENCY CASES OR AS A SYMBOL OF HONOR TO A VISITING DIGNITARY/ BUT THIS CASE IS QUITE DIFFERENT...

OKAY, GABOR/ GET OUT/ YOUR PASSAGE HAS BEEN ARRANGED INCLUDING VISAS, CLEARANCE, BAGGAGE, AND STATE-ROOM/ I HOPE YOU FIND EVERYTHING SATISFACTORY/

YOU INSIST ON CALLING ME "GABOR"/ YOU MINIONS OF THE LAW ARE FOREVER SUSPICIOUS/ MY NAME IS COUNT IGOR POTEMKIN TROBETZKOI, AND I ACKNOWLEDGE NONE OTHER/

LISTEN, YOU FOUR-FLUSHING MASTER OF MASQUERADE/ FOUR TIMES YOU'VE BEEN DEPORTED AND FOUR TIMES YOU'VE COME BACK/ YOU'VE SQUIRMED OUT OF MORE CHARGES THAN OUR LAW HAS LISTED/ BUT THIS TIME YOU'RE *THROUGH!* NOW GET OUT AND *STAY OUT!*

YOU MAY EXPECT YOUR EMPLOYMENT WITH THE FBI TO CEASE ABRUPTLY-- AS SOON AS I CONTACT MY FRIENDS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT/

A FEW HOURS AND A FEW MILES LATER...

AH, EET EEZ A MOS' *WONDERFUL* COUNTRY, AMERICA/ N'EST-CE PAS?

INDEED IT IS/ I HOPE TO RETURN AS SOON AS I COMPLETE A MOST DELICATE DIPLOMATIC MISSION/

TWO MONTHS LATER, IN [illegible] GEORGE ROBERT GABOR WAS STILL DEEPLY [illegible] IN THE DIPLOMATIC [illegible] WAS A MISSION OF [illegible] AND REQUIRED EVERY TRICK AND WILE HE COULD BRING TO BEAR/ IT WAS A MISSION OF LIFE AND DEATH AND GABOR PLAYED IT WITH GRIM REALITY/ GABOR'S DIPLOMATIC MISSION WAS TO REMAIN OUT OF THE HANDS OF THE FRENCH POLICE AND IN SOME WAY KEEP HIMSELF ALIVE BY HONEST MEANS

SO GABOR GAVE HONESTY A TRY BUT...

IT'S NO USE/ I AM CONVINCED THAT HONEST PEOPLE ARE EITHER MAD OR HAVE VERY SORE FEET...OR BOTH/ IT IS TIME THAT I MADE PLANS FOR ANOTHER VISIT TO AMERICA... AND A LIFE OF EASE/

AND BEFORE YOU COULD SPELL C-H-I-S-E-L-E-R THE WILY GABOR WAS PUTTING THROUGH A CALL TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN PARIS...

THE AMBASSADOR IS OUT? TSK...TSK...TOO BAD/ WELL, LEAVE WORD WITH HIM THAT MR. CORLISS PSMYTHE WHITNEY OF LONG ISLAND CALLED/ A FRIEND OF MINE, MR. HOWARD PIERCE OF INTERNATIONAL MOTORS, IS HAVING A LITTLE TROUBLE, AND...

DULY IMPRESSED BY THE SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF THE CALLER, A GREATLY AWED THIRD-ASSISTANT SECRETARY AT THE EMBASSY TOOK THE MESSAGE...

YES, OF COURSE, MR. WHITNEY/ YOUR FRIEND'S NAME IS PIERCE? RIGHT/ YES...YES, SIR/ BE ASSURED THAT WE'LL SHOW MR. PIERCE EVERY COURTESY AND ASSISTANCE IN HIS PROBLEM/ GOOD-BY, SIR/

FROM THIS GUISE AS THE CELEBRATED MR. WHITNEY, GABOR QUICKLY TRANSFORMED HIMSELF INTO THE EVEN MORE FAMOUS HOWARD PIERCE AND PROCEEDED TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE EMBASSY.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY! MY GOOD FRIEND, CORLISS WHITNEY, HAS INFORMED ME THAT HE HAS SPOKEN TO YOU REGARDING SOME DIFFICULTY I AM HAVING OF A VERY PERSONAL NATURE! BRIEFLY, THE STORY IS THIS..."

AND THE LETTER WAS RECEIVED AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY...

THIS IS THAT LETTER FROM MR. PIERCE! YOU RECALL, HE WAS RECOMMENDED BY MR. WHITNEY WHO SAID HE WAS IN SOME SORT OF PERSONAL JAM?

OH, YES, I HEARD SOMETHING ABOUT IT! WHAT SEEMS TO BE TROUBLING MR. PIERCE?

HE HAS A YOUNG NEPHEW HERE... THE SON OF A FORMER VICE-PRESIDENT, WHO HAS BEEN RAISING CAIN AROUND TOWN--SPENDING MONEY, ENTERTAINING QUESTIONABLE CHARACTERS, AND IN GENERAL BEHAVES LIKE A COMPLETE MANIAC! VERY SPOILED YOU KNOW!

THAT'S NOT UNUSUAL FOR THE SONS OF OUR WEALTHY! GO ON, PLEASE!

IT SEEMS THAT THIS NEPHEW WANTED TO MAKE A SOLO FLIGHT TO THE STATES AND NATURALLY MR. PIERCE PUT HIS FOOT DOWN, WITH THE RESULT THAT THE YOUNG MAN THREATENS TO JOIN THE FOREIGN LEGION!

HMM... THAT IS *SERIOUS!* WE CAN'T PERMIT OUR CITIZENS TO MAKE HASTY DECISIONS WHICH THEY'LL LATER REGRET! KEEP ME INFORMED OF ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS!

FROM WHITNEY TO PIERCE, GABOR WAS NOW IN THE PROCESS OF BECOMING PHIL HARNEP, RECKLESS, WEALTHY NEPHEW OF AN AMERICAN BUSINESS TYCOON!

NOW IF MY STUDIES IN HUMAN PSYCHOLOGY DO NOT DECIEVE ME, THE EMBASSY WILL HAVE MADE SECRET ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE COMMANDANT OF THE FOREIGN LEGION TO PREVENT MY ENLISTMENT!

A FEW MINUTES LATER, AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE FRENCH FOREIGN LEGION...

BUT SURELY, M'SIEU, YOU MUST THEENK EET OVER CAREFULLY! AFTER ALL, EIGHT YEARS OF A MAN'S LIFE EES NOT TO BE SNEEZED AT!

YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO STOP *ME!* I AM OLD ENOUGH TO MAKE DECISIONS AND I DEMAND ENTRANCE INTO THE LEGION! I KNOW MY RIGHTS AS AN AMERICAN CITIZEN! I *DEMAND* TO SEE THE COMMANDANT *AT ONCE!*

DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I WANT *ACTION, ROMANCE, ADVENTURE!* I WANT TO TASTE THE BITING DUST OF THE DESERT...LEAD A LIFE OF DEPRIVATION AND DANGER! I'LL SIGN FOR *LIFE* IF NECESSARY!

BUT, M'SIEU...

AND GABOR'S PSYCHOLOGY PROVED CORRECT...

AMERICAN EMBASSY? YES... HE EES HERE! ZE MAN *INSISTS!* WE CAN DO *NOTHEENG* WEETH HEEM! YOU WEEL HURRY DOWN AT ONCE, NO?

ANXIOUS TO PREVENT THEIR ILLUSTRIOUS WARD FROM COMMITTING SOCIAL SUCIDE, TWO EMBASSY OFFICIALS HURRIED DOWN!

BE REASONABLE, MR. HARNEP! YOU HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN AND EVERYTHING TO LOSE BY SUCH A DECISION! THINK IT OVER, PLEASE!

I'VE THOUGHT IT OVER AND I'M DETERMINED TO JOIN THE LEGION! NOTHING YOU CAN DO WILL STOP ME IN THIS DECISION!

YOU DON'T REALIZE THE IMPLICATIONS! ONCE YOU JOIN WE CAN NO LONGER ACCORD YOU THE PROTECTION OF YOUR GOVERNMENT! WHY NOT COME BACK TO THE EMBASSY WITH US AND TALK THINGS OVER CALMLY?

WELL, ALL RIGHT! BUT I *STILL* WANT TO JOIN!

TWO DAYS LATER, THE EMBASSY SECRETARIES WERE STILL TRYING TO CONVINCE HIM THAT HE OUGHT TO GO HOME...TO THE UNITED STATES

YOUR RETURN PASSAGE TO THE STATES HAS BEEN ARRANGED! I BEG OF YOU, MR. HARNEP, TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT AND LEAVE AT ONCE!

I *REFUSE!* YOU'RE FORCING ME TO LEAVE FRANCE AGAINST MY WILL! IF YOU SUCCEED, I PROMISE YOU I WILL MAKE THE RETURN TRIP UNBEARABLE FOR EVERY PASSENGER ON THE SHIP!

NOW IF YOU'LL BE KIND ENOUGH TO GIVE ME YOUR IDENTIFICATION PAPERS, I'LL SEE THAT THEY'RE PROPERLY STAMPED AND APPROVED!

I HAVEN'T ANY IDENTIFICATION PAPERS! I TORE THEM UP.... DESTROYED THEM COMPLETELY!

CONVINCED THAT THE RECKLESS YOUNG HEIR WAS STALLING, THE EMBASSY SECRETARY WENT A STEP FARTHER!

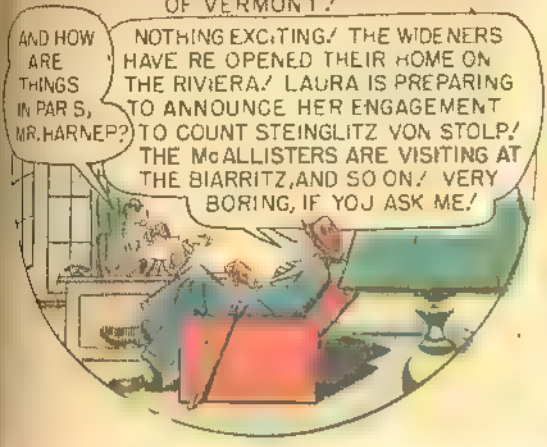
HE HASN'T ANY IDENTIFICATION PAPERS, OR SO HE CLAIMS!

IT'S AN OBVIOUS RUSE TO PREVENT US FROM SHIPPING HIM HOME! GET ALL THE INFORMATION ON HIM AND MAKE OUT NEW PAPERS!

"AGAINST HIS WILL," GABOR FOUND HIMSELF ABOARD A SHIP HEADED FOR AMERICA!

EVEN WITH THE LETTER FROM THE EMBASSY, I WON'T BE ABLE TO SLIP PAST IMMIGRATION AUTHORTIES! I'LL HAVE TO HIT FOR CANADA!

ARMED WITH AN IMPOSING LETTER OF IDENTIFICATION FROM THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN PARIS GABOR MANAGED TO SNEAK ACROSS THE CANADIAN BORDER AND FORTHWITH DEMANDED AN AUDIENCE WITH THE GOVERNOR OF VERMONT./

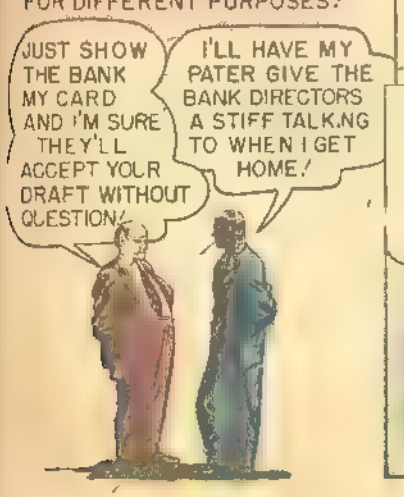

AND HOW ARE THINGS IN PARIS, MR. HARNEP?
NOTHING EXCITING./ THE WIDENERS HAVE RE OPENED THEIR HOME ON THE RIVIERA./ LAURA IS PREPARING TO ANNOUNCE HER ENGAGEMENT TO COUNT STEINGLITZ VON STOLP./ THE McALLISTERS ARE VISITING AT THE BIARRITZ, AND SO ON./ VERY BORING, IF YOU ASK ME./

I'M ANXIOUS TO MAKE YOUR STAY IN VERMONT PLEASANT./ IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU?
NOT REALLY—BUT, *OH, YES,* AN INTRODUCTION TO SOME OF YOUR BETTER CLUBS WOULD HELP./ I'M RATHER TIRED OF EATING IN *MEDIOCRE* RESTAURANTS./

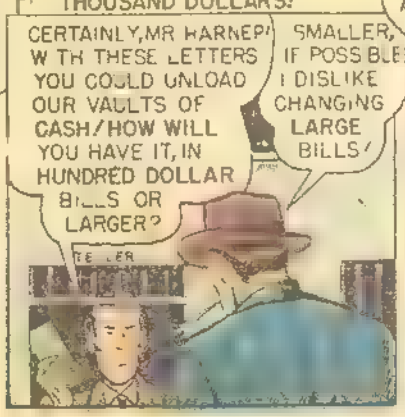
WITH HIS EMBASSY LETTER AND THE GOVERNOR'S PERSONAL CARD, OUR FRIEND "MR. HARNEP" FOUND THE DOOR TO VERMONT'S SOCIETY WIDE OPEN FOR HIM /...

AND OF COURSE, WHEN MORGAN HIMSELF WALTZED INTO THE EXCHANGE, I HAD TO TELL HIM IT WAS ALL A JOKE./ THE MARKET HADN'T BUSTED AT ALL./
HA! HA! HOW *HILARIOUS!* I'D HAVE GIVEN ANYTHING TO HAVE SEEN HIS FACE./

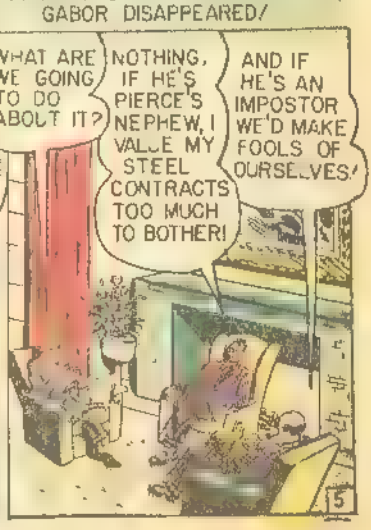
GABOR COLLECTED LETTERS AND SIGNATURES LIKE KIDS COLLECT AUTOGRAPHS... BUT FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES./


JUST SHOW THE BANK MY CARD AND I'M SURE THEY'LL ACCEPT YOUR DRAFT WITHOUT QUESTION./
I'LL HAVE MY PATER GIVE THE BANK DIRECTORS A STIFF TALKING TO WHEN I GET HOME./

WITH THE TIME RIPE FOR ACTION, GABOR MADE HASTE AND A TICKER-TAPE AVALANCHE OF RUBBER CHECKS WENT BOUNCING ABOUT THE STATE TO THE TUNE OF FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS./


CERTAINLY, MR HARNEP! WITH THESE LETTERS YOU COULD UNLOAD OUR VAULTS OF CASH./ HOW WILL YOU HAVE IT, IN HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS OR LARGER?
SMALLER, IF POSSIBLE! I DISLIKE CHANGING LARGE BILLS./
TELLER

AND WHILE ACCOUNTS WERE PONDERED IN DESPAIR AND THE FRIENDS OF MR HARNEP RAGED, GABOR DISAPPEARED/


WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?
NOTHING, IF HE'S PIERCE'S NEPHEW, I VALUE MY STEEL CONTRACTS TOO MUCH TO BOTHER!
AND IF HE'S AN IMPOSTOR WE'D MAKE FOOLS OF OURSELVES!

TWO MONTHS LATER AN INTERESTING ITEM TURNED UP IN A MID-WESTERN NEWSPAPER!

MONSIEUR PIERRE DE RASTIGNAC, NOTED EUROPEAN STYLE EXPERT, WILL BE GUEST OF HONOR AT THE JUNIOR LEAGUE FASHION SHOW TO BE HELD AT THE SAVOY TOMORROW NIGHT! MR DE RASTIGNAC HAS BEEN THE PERSONAL STYLE ADVISER OF MANY OF EUROPE'S MOST FAMOUS PERSONAGES OF ROYALTY AND SOCIETY AND HIS VISIT WILL

NEEDLESS TO SAY, M DE RASTIGNAC WAS NONE OTHER THAN

OH, HOW UTTERLY CHAWMING, M'SIEU DE RASTIGNAC! I WONDAH IF YOU COULD GIVE US A HINT AS TO THE COMING FASHIONS!

AH, OUI! WOMEN SHALL CONTINUE TO WEAR DRESSES. ER, THAT IS, ZE DRESSES WEEL COVER ZE FRONT AND ZE BACK BUT WILL BE OPEN AT ZE BOTTOM FOR ZE FEET!

HOW *RAVISHING!* HOW DO YOU GET THOSE POSITIVELY *REVOLUTIONARY* STYLE TRENDS, M'SIEU?

THE FASHION SHOW IS ABOUT TO START, M'SIEU! WON'T YOU HONOR US WITH YOUR PERSONAL COMMENTS?

AND THEN THERE SHALL BE A RECEPTION FOR YOU AFTER THE SHOW!

WEETH PLEASURE, MADAME! I AM HONORED!

"THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH" IS GENERALLY ASSOCIATED WITH A THREE-RINGED CIRCUS, BUT GABOR RAN THAT SHOW A CLOSE SECOND!

AND THEES NOMBAIRE WEETH ZE CHARMANT UPSWEEP OF ZE DRAPED COULISE EES OF GREAT SIGNIFIGANCE! EET SIGNIFIES SOMETHEENG... I KNOW NOT WHAT... PERHAPS, SHALL I SAY, ZE CALL OF ZE WILD?

WHILE HIS ENRAPTURED AUDIENCE FELL BEFORE HIM LIKE STRAWS BEFORE A WIND, GABOR MADE HAY WHILE THEIR EYES SHONE!

AND YOU SAY THE HOTEL WOULDN'T CASH A CHECK BECAUSE IT WAS MADE OUT ON A FRENCH BANK?! I'LL NOTIFY MY HUSBAND AT *ONCE!*

AH, *NO! NO! NO!* I DO NOT WEESH TO BOTHER WEETH EET! I WEEL MANAGE, SOME HOW!

IT'S *UNTHINKABLE!* THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SHOULD BE INFORMED IMMEDIATELY!

THE FOLLOWING DAY, ARMED WITH LETTERS FROM TWO LEADING CITIZENS, GABOR PASSED A HUGE CHECK AGAINST A NON EXISTANT FRENCH BANK!

IT WAS ALL A HUGE MISTAKE, MR DE RASTIGNAC! HAD I KNOWN YOU WERE A FRIEND OF THE VAN GLITTERS, I WOULDN'T HAVE DREAMED OF...

SAY NO MORE, M'SIEU! YOU ARE ZE MAN OF BUSINESS AND I DO NOT BLAME YOU FOR MAKING ZE NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS!

LIKE A RASH OF MEASLES, FAKE CHECKS SPLATTERED ACROSS THE ENTIRE MID-WEST, AS LARGE SUMS OF MONEY TOOK OFF FROM BASES IN MARBLE BANKS AND HEADED FOR THE WILD BLUE YONDER!

LET'S SKIP A FEW MONTHS AND PEEK INTO THE INTERIOR OF THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF A CERTAIN WESTERN STATE/EXCITEMENT WAS IN THE AIR/ BUT TO PUT IT MORE CRUDELY, THE GOVERNOR WAS BLOWING HIS TOP.

THE SON OF ONE OF OUR LEADING STATESMEN SENDS A TELEGRAM AND NOBODY BOTHERS TO INFORM ME/ I'M SURROUNDED BY GROSS NEFFICIENCY/ I AM SWAMPED BY RED TAPE AND BUREAUCRACY/ I AM AMAZED!

B-BUT, GOVERNOR/ W-WE THOUGHT THE AMBASSADOR WAS IN CHINA WITH HIS ENTIRE FAMILY/ WE DIDN'T *KNOW*...

ISN'T THIS TELEGRAM *SUFFICIENT?* DO YOU NEED PHOTOGRAPHS? CHINA IS THE WORLD'S TINDERBOX TODAY/ OUR PEOPLE MUST BE INFORMED OF THE SITUATION/ CALL THE LEGISLATURE INTO SESSION/ SEND AN ESCORT TO THE STATION TO MEET HIM/

Y--YESSIR/

AND WHO WAS THE "AMBASSADOR'S SON" RIDING BEHIND AN ARMED ESCORT WHILE AN EMERGENCY SESSION OF THE LEGISLATURE WAS CALLED TO ORDER? NONE OTHER THAN...

THE SITUATION IN THE FAR EAST HAS DETERIORATED TO A NEW LOW/ THE CHINESE PEOPLE LACK UNITY/

I *CAN'T* UNDERSTAND IT/ ONLY YESTERDAY THE PRESS REPORTS STATED THAT EVERYTHING WAS QUIET AND PEACEFUL/

AND BEFORE A PACKED, TENSE CROWD IN THE STATE LEGISLATURE, THE STEEL NERVED, BRAZEN GABOR GAVE OUT WITH THE POLITICAL DOUBLE-TALK...

ONLY THROUGH HONESTY AND INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING CAN THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD BE RESOLVED/ THERE IS YET TIME TO CORRECT THE BREACH OF FATE'S DESTINY, BUT REMEMBER... *TEMPUS FUGIT!*

HAVING ESTABLISHED HIS IDENTITY AND CHARACTER, GABOR PROCEEDED TO LEAVE HIS AUTOGRAPHS ABOUT IN RECKLESS PROFUSION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF PHONY CHECKS/

THE PAPERS ARE FULL OF YOUR WONDERFUL SPEECH, SIR/ IT'S A REAL PRIVILEGE TO MEET YOU IN PERSON/

AH, THANK YOU SO MUCH/ ER-- I'LL TAKE IT IN TWENTIES, PLEASE/

BUT ENOUGH WAS TOO MUCH, AND WITH A HUNDRED INVESTIGATORS BREATHING DOWN HIS NECK, GABOR PULLED THAT PART OF HIS ANATOMY INTO THE SHELL OF TEMPORARY OBLIVION AS THE CHASE WHIZZED OVER HIS HEAD/

IBBITY-BIBBITY--SIBBITY-- SAB, UPON WHO'S PURSE SHALL I PLACE MY NEXT TAB?

LET'S LOOK INTO THE INNER SANCTUM OF A BOARD MEETING AT THE COUNTRY'S GREATEST STEEL CORPORATION AND SEE WHAT WENT ON/

GENTLEMEN, THE MAN AT MY LEFT NEEDS NO INTRODUCTION/ HE IS NONE OTHER THAN BARON HEINRICH ZU ESSEN SLUPP, THE THIRD, SON OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST INDUSTRIAL FAMILY/

...AND SO, IT IS NO LONGER A QUESTION OF TARIFFS OR MARKETS, BUT RATHER A PROBLEM OF NEW SOURCES OF RAW MATERIALS! WITHOUT THESE SOURCES, THE MANUFACTURE OF STEEL MUST DIE! I SUBMIT, THAT UNLESS...

AND WITH ALL THE HONORS DUE A MAN OF BARON VON SLUPP'S STANDING, AN INSPECTION OF STEEL MILLS FOLLOWED!

THE PROCESS IS SIMILAR TO OURS IN EUROPE, BUT OUR METHODS OF INJECTION ARE SLIGHTLY BETTER!

OUR ENGINEERS WILL BE HAPPY TO REVAMP OUR DIES ACCORDINGLY, MR. VON SLUPP!

IT IS A MATTER OF RECORD THAT GABOR WAS ESCORTED THROUGH THE NATION'S GREATES. FOUNDRIES, STAYED AT THE HOMES OF THE STEEL BARONS, DINED AND WINED AMONGST THE CREAM OF THE ELITE AND THEN...

NONSENSE! I'LL HAVE MY BANK PUT THROUGH AN IMMEDIATE DRAFT FOR YOU! NOT ANOTHER WORD ABOUT IT, VON SLUPP!

EXCELLENT! NOW, GENTLEMEN, I AM GOING TO LET YOU IN ON A TOP-SECRET BIT OF NEWS! THIS MUST BE KEPT IN *STRICTEST* CONFIDENCE!

AND LIKE A TRUE ACTOR, GABOR'S VIVID IMAGINATION LEFT HIS AUDIENCE GASPING WITH THIS NEXT RARE TIDBIT...

THE SLUPP DYNASTY WILL SHORTLY MELT DOWN EVERY BIT OF ARMAMENT WE POSSESS AND RECAST THE METAL INTO PLOWSHARES IN THE INTERESTS OF WORLD PEACE!

W- WHAT?

IT WAS INEVITABLE THAT SUCH A PIECE OF HISTORY-MAKING NEWS SHOULD SMASH THE HEADLINES OF THE NATION!

DAILY BLARE
MUNITIONS DYNASTY COLLAPSES
...THE CITY...
SLUPP LEADS WORLD IN FIGHT FOR PEACE!
DAILY BUGLE
SLUPP LEADS DISARMAMENT!
THE MOON
SLUPP HEIR REVEALS PLANS FOR PEACE!

THE FOLLOWING DAY WHILE THE ERSTWHILE BARON WAS BEATING A HASTY RETREAT, CAME THE ANSWER.

SENTINELL
SLUPP DENIES RUMOR!
THE PRESS
MUNITIONS MANUFACTURER DISCLAIMS STORY!
THE EDITION
SLUPP DENOUNCES SON AS IMPOSTER!

WITH THE NATION'S LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES HOT ON HIS TRAIL, THE FANTASTIC GABOR REVERSED HIS FIELD AND BECAME, OF ALL THINGS, AN HONEST MAN!

OKAY, MR GREEN! WE'LL START YOU IN THE DOLL STUFFING DEPARTMENT AT THIRTY DOLLARS A WEEK!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH! I.. AH.. *NEED* THE WORK!

NO ONE SEEMED TO KNOW HOW HE DID IT, BUT WITHIN SIX MONTHS, GEORGE ROBERT GABOR, ALIAS MR GREEN, HAD CLIMBED THE LADDER OF SUCCESS UNTIL ONE DAY

WELL, CONGRATULATIONS, GREEN! YOUR PROGRESS WITH THE COMPANY HAS BEEN NOTHING SHORT OF FANTASTIC!

IT'S ONLY A START! SOME DAY I HOPE TO BE SITTING IN THE ROOM NEXT TO YOURS WITH A SIGN READING, "VICE PRESIDENT!"

JOHN FOSTER GREEN GENERAL MANAGER

THERE'S AN OLD ADAGE THAT STARTS "THE BEST LAID PLANS OF MICE AND MEN..." AND AS IT MUST TO ALL CROOKS, GABOR'S NUMBER WAS ONE DAY CALLED

WHAT? IT *CAN'T* BE POSSIBLE! (GULP!) I'D BETTER CALL THE F.B.I.!

MAYBE I'M WRONG, BUT I DON'T THINK SO! HOWEVER, IF THIS IS THE GUY YOU WANT, YOU BETTER COME HERE AND MAKE SURE-- BECAUSE HE'S A BIG SHOT IN TOWN AND WOULDN'T CARE TO MAKE A MISTAKE!

WANTED

AND WITHIN AN HOUR, GABOR'S GOOSE BEGAN TO COOK, SLOWLY BUT SURELY..

SURE, THE GUY'S NAME IS GREEN! EVERYBODY IN TOWN KNOWS HIM! HE'S VERY ACTIVE IN CIVIC AFFAIRS AND HAS A REPUTATION FOR HONESTY THAT'S HARD TO BEAT!

IT'S JUST CRAZY ENOUGH TO SOUND LIKE THE MAN WE'RE LOOKING FOR!

AND THUS, GABOR WAS FINALLY UNMASKED!

IT'S THE END OF THE ROAD FOR YOU, GABOR! LET'S GO!

TO THINK I PLACED MY FAITH AND TRUST IN A SCOUNDREL LIKE THAT!

THE TRIAL WAS SHORT AND THE LONG SENTENCE TO THE POINT...

A WARPED MIND LIKE YOURS CAN BELONG ONLY IN PRISON! BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE MORE CLEVER THAN YOUR FELLOW-MAN, YOU CHOSE A LIFE OF CRIME! I'LL GIVE YOU TWENTY YEARS TO CONTEMPLATE THE ADVANTAGES OF AN HONEST LIFE!

THIS STORY STARTED WITH A DESCRIPTION OF NEW YORK AND ITS CITIZENS, AND THUS IT MUST END! TWO YEARS HAVEN'T CHANGED THE TOWN OR ITS PEOPLE! SO IN 934, WHEN A SLEEK LIMOUSINE WITH A MOTORCYCLE ESCORT WHIZZED DOWN FIFTH AVENUE, NOBODY PAID ATTENTION--NOBODY EXCEPT..

HEY, LOUIE! LOOKA DEM GO! JUST LOOK AT 'EM! THESE BIG-SHOTS MUST CLEAN UP!

SO WHAT? WE CLEAN UP MORE'N THEY DO, BUT IT ISN'T QUITE THE SAME!

EEEE!

"THIS IS A STICK-UP!"

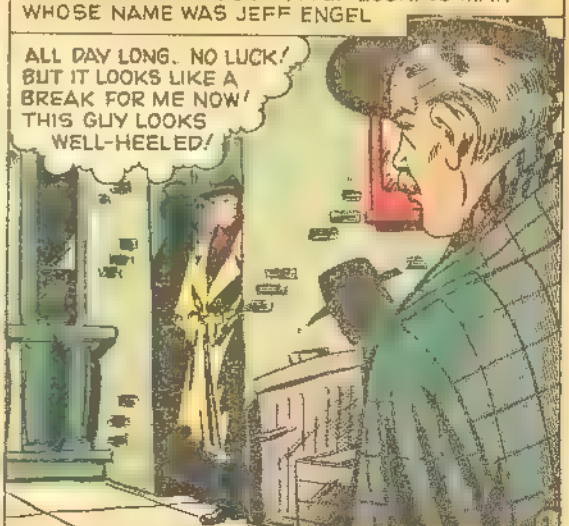
STOP WHERE YOU ARE! THIS MAN IS DANGEROUS AND WILL TOLERATE NO FOOLING AROUND! HE WANTS YOUR MONEY...OR YOUR LIFE! HOW WOULD *YOU* DEAL WITH A DESPERATE CRIMINAL OF THIS TYPE? HERE IS THE TRUE STORY OF WHAT HAPPENED TO ONE OF HIS VICTIMS, WHEN OUT OF THE SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT STEPPED...THE STICK-UP MAN!

1.54

IT WAS THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 21, 1926, AND DANGER LURKED IN THE SHADOWS OF A SIDESTREET IN NEWARK, NEW JERSEY...

THE FIRST GUY WHO COMES DOWN THIS BLOCK... I'M GONNA STICK UP! IT'S BEEN A TOUGH DAY FOR ME... SO FAR! DIDN'T MAKE A CENT! *WAIT A MINUTE...* HERE COMES SOMEBODY!

COMING DOWN THE DARKENED, DESERTED STREET WAS A NEATLY DRESSED MILD LOOKING MAN WHOSE NAME WAS JEFF ENGEL



ANY SIMILARITY BETWEEN ACTUAL PERSONS OR PLACES AND THOSE USED IN THIS STORY IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL

SILENTLY, SWIFTLY MOVING WITH THE STUDIED MOVEMENTS OF A SLEEK CAT, JOE ANDREAS THE STICK-UP MAN, STEPPED INTO THE PATH OF JEFF ENGEL
ALL RIGHT, BUDDY, STICK 'EM UP!
WHA... OHH! SURE! SURE! OH, MY GOODNESS! A HOLDUP! OH, MY!
ER. YOU NEEDN'T WORRY, YOU KNOW! I WON'T CAUSE ANY TROUBLE OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT! YOU WON'T.. ER.. SHOOT ME, WILL YOU?
NAH. NOT IF YOU'RE A GOOD BOY BUSTER! BUT DON'T TRY ANY FUNNY STUFF, OR I'LL LET YOU HAVE IT! I DON'T TRUST ANYBODY, GET ME?
OH, YESSIR! AND I QUITE AGREE, SIR! YOU SHOULDN'T TRUST ANYONE! NOT..IN...YOUR.. ER. PROFESSION! I'LL BE GOOD, SIR! I'LL BE GOOD!
ALL RIGHT! NOW THAT WE'VE GOT THAT STRAIGHT, HAND OVER YOUR MONEY, BUSTER! ALL OF IT!
AND THEN, A STRANGE THING HAPPENED! ENGEL LOOKED AT ANDREWS, AND A SAD SMILE CROSSED HIS FACE.
HEY! WHAT'S FUNNY? HUH? WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING AT? C'MON! TALK... OR I'LL..
OH BUT I'M NOT LAUGHING, SIR! I WAS JUST THINKING. HOW ODD.. HOW VERY STRANGE...HOW BITTER CAN FATE BE!
HUH? WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT, BUSTER?
LISTEN, YOU POOR FELLOW HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WAITING HERE, IN THIS COLD STREET...WAITING FOR.. ER... SOMEONE LIKE ME?
WELL, ABOUT THREE HOURS... AND I'M TIRED, SEE? AND COLD! SO GIVE ME YOUR DOUGH AND LET'S BREAK IT UP!
TSCH! TSCH! THREE HOURS... WAITING! AND WHO HAD TO COME ALONG BUT ME, OF ALL PEOPLE! MY, MY! YOU DO HAVE BAD LUCK, DON'T YOU?

LISTEN, YOU... STOP FOOLIN' AROUND, AND GIVE ME THE DOUGH, CHUM.. QUICK!
WHY, YES, OF COURSE, SIR! CERTAINLY! HERE YOU ARE!
REACHING INTO HIS COAT POCKET, ENGEL TOOK OUT HIS MONEY, AND HELD IT OUT TO THE HOLD-UP MAN!
HERE!
THIRTY-FIVE CENTS! FOR THE LOVE OF MIKE! IS THAT ALL YOU'VE GOT? THIRTY-FIVE CENTS?
YES! I'M AWFULLY SORRY FOR YOU! WA TING SO LONG, HERE IN THE COLD... AND THEN I COME ALONG WITH THIS PITTANCE, THIS SMALL AMOUNT! MY! MY! YOU'RE IN BAD LUCK, MY FRIEND!
BAD LUCK! BAD LUCK! YOU SAID IT, BUD! AHH... I OUGHTTA BEAT YOU UP WITH MY BARE HANDS... I'M SO SORE! OF ALL THE CHEAP, ROTTEN BREAKS! THIRTY-FIVE CENTS! BAH!
TSCH! TSCH!
LOOK, PAL.. I'VE GOT NO GUN, SEE? THIS IS ONLY A PIPE! ...AND NOW I'M GOING TO WORK ON YOU WITH MY FISTS!
NO GUN?
NO! NO GU.. (ULP!)
THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO KNOW!
CLICK!
HEY! WHAT IS THIS? YOU'RE... YOU'RE A COP!
THAT'S RIGHT, MY FRIEND! JUST DETECTIVE JEFF ENGEL! COME ALONG TO THE STATION HOUSE, TOUGH GUY! I'D LIKE TO HAVE YOU MEET SOME OF MY FRIENDS!
I KNEW IT! I KNEW IT! I TRUSTED YOU... AND I SHOULDN'T HAVE TRUSTED YOU! I SHOULDN'T TRUST ANYBODY! WHAT A BREAK! WAITING THREE HOURS IN THE COLD... AND YOU COME ALONG... A COP... WITH YOUR THIRTY-FIVE CENTS, TO MAKE ME SORRY FOR YOU, AND TRUST YOU! I KNEW IT! I SHOULDN'T HAVE TRUSTED ANYBODY! OH, WHAT A BREAK! WHAT A CHEAP, ROTTEN BREAK!
YEAH! TSK! TSK!
TRAPPED BY THE QUICK-TRIGGERED MIND OF DECTECTIVE ENGEL, JOE ANDREWS WAS ESCORTED TO JAIL TO AWAIT TRAIL! HE WAS SENTENCED TO FIVE YEARS TO THINK OVER THE WRONG AND RIGHT WAYS OF LIFE!

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